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Christmas gift of
the authoress
Miss Mary K.
Andra 24 Dec. 1871



REVERIES OF SONG.



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REVERIES OF SONG

BY

C. M. BIRCH.

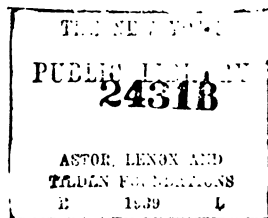


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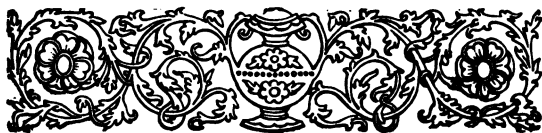
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ERRATA.

Page 65, l. 3, *for* drear *read* fair.

Page 107, *for* The Huguenot Lovers *read* The Huguenot.





THE EVE OF THE NATIVITY.

IN Spring the land is deck'd around
with flowers of varied hue ;
In Autumn, faded leaves contrast
against a sky of blue ;
In Summer, many forms and waves are lit with
golden light,
But Winter wreathes the whole wide world in one
fair robe of white.
E'en sky and earth melt into one, all colours dis-
appear
At this glad season of the birth and closing of the
year.
It searches out each crevice, and each long forgotten
nook,

And hides beneath a snowy veil the young face
of the brook.

It buries wither'd leaves that fall from morn till
eventide,

Conceals the beaten track that lay around the
church-yard's side.

And all the prairies and the woods, where village
children stray'd,

And fallow lands, that lately stood thick with the
shining blade.

This is the eve when in the East a wondrous Star
appear'd,

When throngs of angels earthward came, and to a
manger near'd ;

When pausing on their way they told the shepherds
of the wild,

To us was born in David's town a Saviour and a
Child ;

A Monarch, and a Prince of Peace, a glorious King
of might,

Who in His precious Blood should wash our sins of
scarlet white.

Strange it is at this season, *all* in purity is clad,

As 'twere to prove that promise ; so rejoice and be
ye glad ;

Lift up with faith your hearts again as lilies from
the dust,
And hail with joy this holy eve, in God place all
your trust.
Again shall dead leaves dot the ground, again dark
clouds shall roll,
Tempestuous waves rise up and swell the rivers of
the soul :
Now a pure fount has risen to cleanse our souls
from every stain,
Who once has drank that Living Stream shall never
thirst again !

1866. . . .



"PEACE." THE BURIAL OF WILKIE

FROM A PICTURE BY J. M. W. TURNER, R.A.



IS night—and all around is peace!
No sounds are heard save these—
flow
Of darkling waves that never cease,
Of zephyrs soft that gently blow.

No scene in sight ; but on the bay*
A lonely steam-ship† lightly roves ;
But soon all stirlessly shall lay,
For now her shadow scarcely moves.

And ah ! a still, a solemn awe,
Broods o'er the bosom of the deep ;
For one who fill'd our isles with store,
Has calmly, sweetly, fall'n asleep.

* The Bay of Biscay.

† The Oriental.

Cloudlets array'd and beaming bright,
Like angels hover near the bow ;
For ere time sets his seal to-night,
A form shall rest in depths below.

The glimmer of the pallid stars
Shines out like lights on chancel walls,
And bending on the open bars,
The rising moon now faintly falls.

The torches send their flames on high,
Yet o'er the scene with radiance stream ;
The wind's soft music whispers nigh,
While fitfully the rockets gleam.

Lingering awhile a gather'd band
Repeat their prayer to God on high,
Consigning to His loving hand
That favour'd soul so willingly.

Then far away from sight, and shore,
Upon the bay's unfathom'd bed ;
Down, down he sinks, and never more
Shall lift again his hallowed head.

6 *THE BURIAL OF WILKIE.*

Gently he falls, swift to his rest,
Destined by God with Him to be ;
Softly he sinks, there with the blest
To lie until Eternity.

* * * * *

Tis daybreak, but the steamship's fled,
Long pass'd the grave so lately made,
But as green hillocks o'er the dead,
The high waves mark where Wilkie's laid.



A LAST TOKEN.

TO —————



F, in a vision of the night
My form arise, as calm and bright,
As in past days,
Call up the blest one of thine heart,
Then bid my spirit to depart,
And on her gaze.

Let her in brightness supersede,
And on her brow of beauty read
A future tale ;
A tale so true and loved by thee,
Surpassing all I've said to thee
In yonder vale.

Oh ! let me be remember'd not,
I wish it thus to be my lot,
And as we were :


To-night, this very night we part,
For you have tried too much a heart
So full of care.

Farewell ! and may you happy be,
Forget ! yes, all I've said to thee,
Remember not :
What you have spurn'd to call your own,
And never yet have fully known,
And now cannot.

Remember but my *last* request,
My task is done, and all the rest
Remains with you ;
Farewell ! may happiness be thine,
And sunshine round thy path still shine ;
Once more, adieu.



TO THOMAS GRAY.

OLLING years like coursers high,
Bid before them mortals fly,
Hasty or reluctantly,
Careless who is first to die,
All must glide away ;
Ne'er shall wave or flood efface
That deep everlasting trace,
Poet ! thou hast left to grace
Time's wide-swelling bay.

Ever on the rolls shall shine
That immortal name of thine,
Blazing with a light divine,
Brighter than a silver mine,
Brighter—far more pure—

Thine will glow when that white gloss
Tarnish'd shall resemble dross,
Buried in a roadside fosse,
Sold for something newer.

The sweet thoughts within thy brain,
Made it like a wide domain,
Seam'd with sunshine, steep'd in rain,
Nought was seen by thee in vain,
For God gave thee power.
Every form a lesson taught,
Sweetly by thy soul inwrought,
With thy thoughts no others thought
On fame's loftiest tower.

In the flowery verdant lands,
In the shade the grove demands,
'Neath the ether that expands,
Round the work of God's own hands,
Lone thou wentest forth ;
Pausing in a churchyard ground,
Bade thy tuneful soul expound,
While the darkness veil'd each mound,
A lay of untold worth.

A lay of which a warrior said,
Who forth to Quebec armies led,
Who nobly for his country bled,
And made those heights his deathly bed,
 And won a victor's crown ;
“ Rather than with proud heroes throng,
And win the fame I've fought for long,
Would I my soul could take this song,
 And claim it for its own.”

Where the wiry willows' shade,
In that acre where he stray'd,
Two more sunlit mounds are made,
Side by side for ever laid,
 Weary travellers read,
“ She was call'd the first to die,
God's own angel pass'd me by,
Misfortune to outlive her.—I
 Mourn'd my mother dead.”

Greener may the laurel be,
Shadier far the leafy tree,
Fairer, too, the floweret free,
Lily bending tremblingly,
 Sweetly o'er the wave ;

Gorgeous clouds of golden glare,
Ceaseless songs of birds of air,
Requiems from the house of prayer,
Linger at thy grave.

Whilst the dewy dotted ground
Spreads primæval gems around,
Tinted leaves fall without sound,
Till the land lies dark ice-bound,
Shall these rise thereon.
There the silver sounding rain,
Mingling in a hallow'd strain,
Shall re-echo thine again,
To the Mercy Throne.

When a world like thine appears,
Vast dominions, coming years,
Roll it on to reach their spheres,
Through the chaos of their fears,
Fear not thine will lie!
Placed with planets in the height,
Dazing thy majestic light
Will retard their hasty flight,
To gaze wonderingly.


All must in their order go ;
Struggling ones on earth below,
Cannot reach thee on tip-toe,
Westward hies the dark cloud's brow,
· Making earth's forms dim ;
Heavenly lamps are better seen,
Mingling with the starlight sheen,
Life's wide gulf too lies between
The horizon's rim !



LADY LEONORE.

A LEGEND.

PART I.

IR HAROLD was a knight in years long
lost,
Who boldly fought with sword and lance
of steel,

A braver man ne'er walk'd the plains of war :
Upright and honest, and each morn and eve
Upon the battle field, beside his couch.
Lifted in prayer his voice, and pray'd to God
" Whate'er betide, Thy Holy Will be done !"

A truce was sign'd, and forth he went his way
(Crown'd with all martial honours kings bestow)
To distant climes, far from his fatherland,
To woo the lovely lady of his love,

Who dwelt in Castle Clare beside the sea :
A lonely castle, rounded by a moat,
Where water lilies crept in mazy mood,
Or tangled in the rush, or flowering reed :
Where slept the newt, and where the silver fins
Of fishes shone away in contrast too,
Joyous in freedom's hall, at will to glide.
In rich parterres she stroll'd abroad at noon,
Culling coy flowers, that bloom'd in summer time,
Fragrant and balmy in the south wind's breath.
Lightly she took, oft casting them away
If they contrasted not as she desired.
Ah, when Sir Harold saw his Leonore,
His heart beat tuneful, for he loved her well ;
She, smiling, greeted him upon the bridge,
Where they so oft had met in times before.
Slowly his manly heart commenced to tell
His tale of love ; gently, with soft kind words,
Unfolding all his thoughts, as flowers unfold
Their rich dyed leaves at summer's early morn :
Heedless she listen'd ; when his voice had ceased,
Heartless she told him (blushing as she spoke,
Spoke from her parted lips, spoke from her eyes,
Her fair blue eyes, as fair as wavelings blue),

To go and love another, not love her ;
For she could ne'er believe in love of knights ;
She *once* had loved him, but no more since he
Did choose to win the battle of the field,
And cared to win it more than win her love,
Which was not very firm at any time,
Not half so lasting as the scented flowers
That then she flung into the water wide.

“ What use are they ? ” she gently said, and turn'd
Her fair blue eyes, and gazed upon his face,
That was nigh hidden by a visor bright,
“ Poor useless things, so fickle in their growth,
They live a day—and perish, who know how ?
And yet the poets liken them to us.”

Silent he stood, still leaning on the bridge,
Watching the wandering eyes of Leonore ;
The sun behind a pale pink cloud peep'd out,
And gilded all his armour bright like gold,
And gilded all the sea, and gather'd flowers,
That floated on the silver lines of waves.

Sudden, a butterfly with gaudy wings,

(From neighbouring myrtle boughs that grew
beside

The lonely castle rounded by a moat)
Came languid forth, fluttering and breathing in
The incensed air of the warm atmosphere ;
Uncertainly it sported, veering close.
Over the rich parterres—the green grass sward
That sloped down faintly to the water's rim ;
Over the sea it flew, but halted there
Upon the flower buoy'd up by silver waves,
There found a resting place—a balmy bed.
The flower, a fair-dyed flower ; and as it drank
In the cool waters, as it floated on,
Itself and all its train, a perfumed fleet,
It bloom'd out beauteous, like a coral cup.

Then turn'd the knight away, sore sick at heart,
His dark eyes flashing through the tears that stood
Therein ; and, kneeling down with one knee bent,
Till death he vow'd to love his Leonore.
She call'd him foolish, bade him go again
And conquer foes, and love some other one,
Far worthier than herself, and who would prize
That which his generous heart yearn'd so to give.

Then mounted he in haste his jet black steed
Without the castle wall, and rode away.

Down sank the sun into the silent sea,
In lustrous splendour, like a living soul
Departing glorious amid good deeds.

PART II.

RIGHT soon the dark cold night crept lowly up :
And all the land was veil'd in shadow grey,
The lovely sea and lovely firmament.

Sir Harold and his steed paced long the shore,
Paced to and fro the shore to Castle Clare :
The knight in meditation deep and drear,
For oh ! how heartless was his lady love :
How heartless was her light and short response,
It made foul discord sounds and jarr'd his heart,
That but so lately beat in tuneful time ;
For he had fought so brave with lance of steel
To win high fame, that Lady Leonore
Might deem him worthier than other men.

His heart grew heavy as he ponder'd thus,
And soon the burden of his thoughts press'd down
Till his sad heart could not sustain the weight.
So knelt he down beside his jet black steed,
Upon the pebbled shore, all damp and dank,
With mailèd hands uplifted t'ward the skies,
And cow'rd his head with helm and vizor bright,
And that the prayer of prayers his heart sent forth,
"Whate'er betide Thy Holy Will be done."
In a long wail that rent the lone sea air,
That rent the silence that was kept around,
Whilst it ascended to the throne of God.
So long, so pure, heaven melted as she heard,
Heaven melted as that voice rose to its God.
Dark clouds dispersed in silver rain: and then
Planets commenced to glow through hazy veils,
And pale light stars began to shine away,
And a young moon came forth and walk'd abroad,
The bride of heaven she drew her veil aside,
And soft white clouds like rose leaves pass'd away.
The Pleiads and the Pole Star and the Bear,
Orion and the Wain, and Milky-way,
Soon shone out lustrous in those meteless fields.
They shimmer'd on the walls of Castle Clare,

Upon her turrets and her bulwarks firm,
Upon the pont and on the flowery moat ;
And on the lone sea-shore and mountain mist'd
And wave that crested crystal on the marge.

Lo, as he rose consoled, in reverence,—awed
As he beheld God's works—out on the sea
He spied the beauteous flower that Leonore
Had thrown thereon as useless, and to die :
So flinging down his shield and lance of steel,
He bade his faithful steed his will await ;
Then stepping in among the gnarlèd flags
And rank sea-rush, that grew around the marge,
He plunged to seize the fair, the precious prize,
Cull'd by the fingers of his Leonore.

Long swam he 'gainst the waters' adverse tide ;
Oh false is distance when the night is come.
Wave after wave pass'd by, still toil'd he on,
Till his strong limbs began to lose their strength.
The moon look'd down, in pity flooding all
In silvery splendour, pointing where it lay ;
But weak and weaker grew that mail'd man's strength,
And faint and fainter wax'd his failing breath,

(His steed neigh'd wildly from the lone sea-shore,)
One moment more, and as he grasp'd the flower,
And press'd it to his heart, and cross'd his arms
Upon his breast oft scarr'd with point of steel,
He thank'd his God, and rose to sink no more.
Thus died Sir Harold for his lady-love,
Only to take the rose her fingers press'd,
The cruel, heartless Lady Leonore !
And there above the waves he floated on,
Toward the heavens were fix'd those dark black eyes,
But the fair light that shone from those dead eyes
Was like the "glory of a setting star."

At midnight rose a cold thin mist, that came
Seaward, and wrapp'd the knight in skirt of white,
Ethereal as the robes the angels wear.

PART III.

THE morn awoke,—again a shining sun
Far flooded vales and hills and mountains steep,
And lighten'd on the walls of Castle Clare.

Wandering along came Lady Leonore
Down to the water's rim,—the lone seashore ;
With all her maids attired in silken robes,
With fingers jewell'd, and with jewell'd hair,
Conversing gaily of the last night's ball,
Of who look'd fairest, who most beautiful.
Talk led them on ; one hour had wing'd its flight
And still they wiled their time in vacant mood :
Lo ! sudden, as she raised her wave-blue eyes
She saw the train of flowers she cast away,
Floating upon a still, a glassy sea,
Becalm'd—bereft of all its feathery foam :
“ Ah, me ! we'll walk and see the last of these.”
She said, and all her maids consented glad
So sped with lighter steps and wandering eyes.

And as they watch'd they saw a tiny boat
Nearing the marge, therein a dead young form,
Row'd slowly to the land by boatmen twain,
Which, when her maids beheld, they turn'd away
And track'd the paths in haste to Castle Clare :
Straight to the landing-place walk'd Leonore,
Raising with grace her jewell'd hand, to hide
Her snow-white temples from the slanting sun,

That crown'd each wave with golden coronet,
And shone far brighter than Excalibur.

The boat came up, the boatmen took the knight
And laid him low near Lady Leonore :
Still gazed she vaguely for a little while,
And then, O God ! she saw her lover's eyes,
That ne'er could look on her again with love.
So knelt she down upon the landing-place,
And wildly press'd his head against her breast,
And moved the tangled hair from off his front,
And seal'd his dead dark eyes with snowy lids,
And then she loved Sir Harold—but *too late*.
Then deem'd him worthier than other men !
Her heart gave way—and melted like the snow
From off Mont Blanc when summer seasons reign,
And pearly tears shone in her wave-blue eyes,
And mingled with the tear that lay congeal'd
Upon the face of him whose head reclined
Still on her breast in death—to love no more.
Trembling she bent to take his hand so white
And cold—beneath them still was clasp'd and kept
The rose she threw, as useless and to die.
This told the history true, this told the tale

That she remember'd long—ay, till she died ;
For as she paused to stay fresh tears that well'd
From out the centre of the pale pink flower
The gaudy butterfly came joyous forth,
And sailed on gilded wings right through the air,
And then the balmy petals, deck'd with dew,
Fell one by one upon his heart and died !



OH, COULD'ST THOU KNOW.



H ! could'st thou know this writer's heart,
Had'st thou but seen,
The tears of lovingness that flow'd,
Or how her cheek all crimson glow'd,
When thou wert nigh !
Or how soon Love's enchantment sprung,
Within her heart as yet so young,
When thy glance met her eye !
Oh, let these words into thine heart
Fall like a summer shower,
Or like the sun that sends a dart,
To gild a lonely flower.

THE SENTINEL OF POMPEII.¹

ON A PICTURE BY E. J. POYNTER, A. R. A.



ARK, what fearful sounds are rushing
Far around tumultuously ;
See the azure sky is blushing,
List the raging of the sea !

See, the flames on high are spreading,
Whilst the burning lava runs
Down the mountain, and afar ring
Booming sounds, like myriad guns.

Yes ! Vesuvius' burning fountains
Gush in wild and awful sound ;
And the mighty distant mountains,
Now the fearful threats resound.

Shouts and wails so agonizing
Rend the lately peaceful air ;
Countless forms are madly rising,
Falling on their knees in prayer.

Thick the cloud of darkness hovers
In Pompeii's lovely vales ;
All its beauties now it covers,
All its glories now assails.

• • • •

Without Pompeii's wall is standing
A youth, a noble sentinel ;
By the emperor's commanding,
Guarding still the citadel.

Hears he not the rolling thunder,
Sees he not the gleaming sky ;
How the rocks are rent asunder,
For he rests there fearlessly ?

Yes, for round the wall is streaming
That deep crimson fiery hue,
'Tis upon his bright helm gleaming,
But till death he'll rest there true.

Manfully all courage straining,
Bravely his life's part to play ;
Through confusion's terror reigning
All forgotten, he will stay.

Swiftly round the fire is glancing,
Meekly now his arms are crossed,
Nearer, faster, close advancing,
Are the burning ashes tossed.

For a moment flits before him
One sweet face long loved for years,
Passionate desires come o'er him,
And his face turns pale with fears.

For he almost hears her crying,
Calling wildly, " Come to me !"
In her anguish slowly dying,
In distressful agony.

Still he stands, his will unmoved,
FAITHFUL UNTIL DEATH is he :
Faithful soldier, tried and proved,
Thou *hast* gained the victory !

Oh ! ye readers, as ye wander
In our isle, or far away,
Of the faithful soldier ponder,
Learn your calling—and obey.

In your time of trial remember
Faithful until death to be,
Loving Christ your King, Defender,
Ye will gain the victory.

Sadly I relate his story—
Sad his fate—but surely now
It is joy to think that glory
Must illumine his noble brow.



THE WALK.



SAW some leaves upon the ground,
I pick'd one up, but it was dead;
The wind sigh'd by it and around,
Its odour had not fled.

I took the leaf, I could not bear
To see it perish and decay;
I placed it with things sweet and fair
I cherish'd many a day !

I walk'd along, I saw a grave
Grown with long grass, and raised on high
A simple cross, above it waved
Some ivy, and it met mine eye.

For on that cross there was a bird,
Which sung so sweet, and seem'd to say,
“ I'll sing to thee, when thou art gone ;
For soon or late must come thy day.”

THE MEXICAN CAPTIVE.*



DECREES are sent round all the land
Of Mexico's wild range,
To find a youth, for they demand
Beauty so rare and strange,
Such as kind Nature seldom gives
To one who in that country lives.

The loveliest youth of that wild waste
Is chosen for a year,
All luxuries of the world to taste ;
And why such dread and fear ?
Why quakes that manly heart decreed ?
What are those fearful looks we read ?

Now all are turn'd to view that one
That stands so proudly by,
With conscious mien, for soon's begun
High praise that murmurs nigh.

A princely train around him stand
To wait his summons and command.

The morning dawns, the feasts are spread
Of costly food so rare.
Forth from his chamber he is led
To view the feasts prepare.
Beguiled, his fears are chased away
For sumptuous sights around display.

Behold the rich Chollula ware
Arranged and quickly placed,
Before his eyes that wander there ;
Then soon the board is graced
With fruits, that ripen 'neath the skies
That deepen all their own fair dyes.

Around his head the plumes one wreathes
Of gold and purple hue,
And the sweet odorous air he breathes
Each day is changed anew.
Sweet music with most tuneful notes,
In the grand hall now faintly floats.

Then to the city of high fame,
Magnificent and grand,
He walks, the crowd shouts wild his name ;
He views the temples stand,
And point their altars to the skies,
Oft stain'd with human sacrifice.

He sees the wide lake sparkling bright,
Upon whose surface calm
The boats are placed so gay and light,
And in the morning balm
The perfum'd flowers are blooming seen,
Quite beauteous in the warm sun's sheen.

Months pass away, and suns decline,
Joy still flits gaily by ;
Fresh gorgeous splendours round him shine,
Dazzling his youthful eye :
Bewildering thoughts creep o'er his mind,
But pleasures still his senses bind.

But now the dread of death steals on ;
That death so nigh at hand :
The beauty of rich splendour's gone,
All sights that they command

Cannot appease that manly heart
That throbs with pain with life to part.

Alone within his room at night,
He paces up and down :
Ah, what is beauty rare and bright,
What is a princely crown
To one, whose life has just begun,
Whose fame and splendour all is done ?

“ Oh, could my life be lived again,
But that is not to be !
I must submit to cruel pain ;
My murderers shall not see
Remorse that fills my heart with gloom,
My fate is seal'd, I wait my doom ! ”

The day has come,—the fatal day,
His dearest friends are nigh,
His mother faints in grief away,
Large tears shine in his eye ;
For there his loved one he beholds,
Whom fondly in his arms he folds.

Their hearts throb high—their sighs are blent,
 Sad silence reigns around :
In agony their prayers are sent,
 For hasty steps resound—
A cold, a lifeless form lies there
It drives the captive to despair !

Adieu to all I've loved, he saith,
 My life's short race is run ;
I gladly welcome thee, oh death !
 For death has now begun :
Soon on the altar lifeless lay
That captive victim, cruel man's prey.

Such is our life, the world beguiles
 Our senses, and it seems
Deceitfully to lend its smiles,
 To gild aspiring dreams :
But such is human destiny,
Fame ends too oft in misery.

THE DEPARTED ONE.



THE hour has told its last farewell,
To those past scenes so sad yet bright,
The day is finish'd, and I'll tell
Thee all my sorrows ere 'tis night.

So when at dawn the azure sky
Was spread around and clear above ;
The golden sun rose far on high,
In those far realms of peace and love.

My feet perchance did stray awhile,
Into the pleasant old greenwood ;
How oft before I'd climb'd that stile
In happy days of sweet childhood.

I saw the sun rise through the trees,
And peep between the old brown barks ;
And all among the verdant leas,
Then up arose the gay skylarks.

The bees were murmuring here and there,
The flies were glancing to and fro,
Delighting in the sun's bright glare,
Scarce knowing which way they should go.

The squirrels leapt from tree to tree,
With nimble skill and cunning art ;
Then silently look'd out to see
The nuts with which they could depart.

And there, there spread the oak so strong,
There grew the larch and poplar high ;
The humble ivy crept along,
And the young aspen trembled nigh.

Crowned with their fair and purest gems,
Which shone in clusters here and there ;
The wild flowers twined around the stems,
And scented the pure morning air.

I then retraced my steps to gain
The hilly steep, in that churchyard
Wherein my dearest wife was lain,
Safe from all care—for angels guard !

My thoughts were flowing fast, and sad
Were all those thoughts, though once my li
Would I have given ; but now I'm glad
She has no more of earthly strife.

I reach'd the hill, and through the gate
I pass'd, then I beheld the mound
Where in sweet peace she sleeps, to wait
The judgment trumpet's awful sound.

The flowers just bathed in morning dew,
Were fresh and springing over all ;
The daisy white, the harebell blue,
The briar rose, and bracken tall.

Oh, those bright visions of our love,
How fast they rush'd into my mind,
The pictures painted far above,
Pass'd quicker than the passing wind.

They swept the love notes of my heart,
The tender chord did give away ;
Oh ! is it real, oh ! did we part ?
Yes, yes indeed that cruel day.

She was the sunshine of my home,
And the bright summer of my youth ;
She was my life ; the day has come,
And she has pass'd away in truth.

I wove a wreath of sweet wild flowers,
I bathed them o'er with many a tear :
Silent, I sat with her for hours,
Her spirit seem'd to wander near.

I placed the wreath upon her grave
So that the fragrance might extend
From heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,
With blest unseen communion blend.

Her soul is there, although there lies
Her body in that narrow bed ;
Her spirit dwells in yonder skies ;
She only sleeps—she is not dead.

TO THE UNITED FATHERLAND.

BEAT on, great German heart of unity,
In a perpetual tenor of sweet peace.
For ever, through all ages, through all
time,

Through every generation that shall live
To see each various change and destiny :
Beat on for ever, Unity is strength :
Beat on for ever, let the wide world hear
An everlasting harmony in thee ;
And in thy powerful power, out-rival all
Existing monuments that yet remain
To prove what has been. May God prosper thee.

Fear not, O Fatherland, though storm and strife
Have shipwreck'd many a noble life in thee,
Have caused thy sires to wail, thy daughters weep,
And laid thy brave sons low in agony.
From out their graves shall grow immortally

The laurel that shall wreathe thy lovely land
In lovelier splendour, and shall barrier
Thy borders from thy foes.

Peace to the dead,
And may their memory be bless'd indeed :
Forget them not, for their life blood has flow'd
So willingly to win thee "lasting peace"
There where the spirits of the just repose,
There where men's works do ever follow them,
May they be resting in a happy rest.

We grieve and fret because imperfect sight
Falters our faith, we cannot see through all
The wonder-working of The Wonderful.
How His great sovereign Will pervades through all,
And never weary, though we deem it so.
For this bright gleam, O Fatherland, has burst
From the dense cloud of dark adversity.

Beat on, great heart—beat on exultingly,
God in a wondrous way hath builded up
The very thing man schemed to undermine ;
And what He binds no man can separate,
And what He wills no man dare overthrow.

And if He loves each single heart of ours,
And watches o'er it, oh ! so tenderly,
What will His care be to so great a one ?
Fear Him, and love Him, trust in Him **alway** ;
Life's struggle and life's turmoil **soon** shall cease,
In a bright land above **triumphantly**,
The kings of **earth** shall bring their glory in,
And bring their nation's glory. This be thine.



ALONE.



THE early sun was coming forth, I wander'd up to see
Its golden light reflect about on mound
and glen and tree ;
It darted out its beams, it shed a fire across
the sea,
On all earth's offerings, and yet it spread no light
for me.

In neighbouring glens the woodman's axe fell'd
patriarchal tree,
In far-off fields the herds and flocks fed and stroll'd
out so free,
Around the thorns the village maids danced in
festivity,
Each mingled with each other, but none cared to
come to me.

I sat beside a streamlet fair, meandering full and
free,

I heard its song, and thought at last, it singeth out
for me ;

I tried to tune my mournful heart to keep it
company,

Alas ! it said, " Stay not, my song is for the willow
tree."

I enter'd in the house of God, knelt low upon my
knee,

Others were praying deep, their prayers blended
unitedly.

With those dear ones whom they had left at home
—(could we but see),

So rose their prayers together—mine ascended
separately.

The busy city's foot-path trod, where thousands walk,
and be,

But yet alone I press'd quite lone, no foot kept
pace with me ;

By two and two fond forms went forth, bound by
Thy wise decree,

Hearts that had throb'd, hands that had worked
their work unitedly.

I stand beneath the burning stars on plains beside
the sea,
And think of the great host that's gone unto
Eternity,
Of the great host all living now, and when I shall
not be ;
How none have ever, or shall give a heartfelt sigh
for me.

All day my castle gate stands wide, my banquet
halls are free
To weary pilgrims ; many pass, none care to come
to me :
A mother wends by quick to clasp her baby to her
knee,
An old man to embrace once more his laddie from
the sea.

And when Death's hour comes on, oh God ! alone I
still shall be,
No one will linger by my couch to tell me words of
Thee,

No one will hear my last wild prayer before my
soul goes free,
Free from its mortal tenement, to brook Eternity.

Lone I shall lie in shroud of white, beneath the
dark lime tree,
Under its shadow, but its shade will not be flung
for me,
Others will lie there all around, cover'd with
flowerets free,
Hearts that have throb'd, hands that have worked
their work unitedly.

Perchance I'll lonely lie beneath the swelling
lonely sea,
But it will tune its mournful dirge for others, not
for me ;
The wild fowl 'll lie in reedy haunts to list its
melody,
The flowers that underneath it bloom will love it
secretly.

Lastly, when the great trumpet sounds, by God's
divine decree,

I shall stand forth alone, quite lone, His unveil'd
Face to see,
To hearken to His voice of love, His judgment
pass'd on me,
Then, oh, my God, who know'st all hearts! unite
mine unto Thee.

For ever now, for ever then, for ever unto Thee,
All my life long, throughout the rest, through all
eternity ;
For Thou, O Christ, didst suffer awful loneliness
for me,
Therefore I freely give, what Thou dost ask, my
heart to Thee !

Take it, and with Thyself each day, O let me
strengthen'd be,
To bear each trial, temptation, cross, in silence
patiently,
Thy will be done ; and when my task shall all com-
pleted be,
Call me across Life's stormy waves, and bid me
come to Thee.

Upon Thine Arm I'll gently lean, and linger tear-
lessly,
The waters cannot rise above the Rock where I
shall be,
There let me gaze on Thy dear Face, in fear, yet
fearlessly,
And there the very essence of my soul pour out to
Thee.

Oh, give me faith and hope and love, and peace
that will not flee,
Above all other gifts bestow these gifts most boun-
teously,
Then as Thou only canst, I pray unite me mys-
tically,
Until I am, and live, and be, not in myself but
THEE.



A REVERIE ON RAPHAEL.

FROM A PICTURE (THE LAST MOMENTS OF RAPHAEL),

PAINTED BY H. O'NEIL, A.R.A.



H, Raphael ! heav'nly gifted Raphael !
Fain would I linger long to gaze on thee :
With awe my very soul within me throbs,
And with its deeper joy, and with its fire,
It burneth up the curtains that conceal
The past from mortal eyes, its dark, dark veil ;
And memory, fond, endearing memory
Waits patient till the cloud-wreaths pass away ;
And then she doth reveal, reveal of thee,
All that indeed she deem'd so beautiful,
Thy mind, the visions that were painted there,
Within, without, around the mansion of
Thy pure celestial soul indelibly.

Oh, Raphael ! painter that can never die,
Let me draw near and wait awhile by thee ;
Draw as a guest, unnoticed among men,

And in this hour of holy peacefulness,
Watch thee within thy window'd chamber lie,
Where through it shines the heaven's illumined light
Without is peace, ay, peace that earth can show ;
Calm lies the painted sky toward the west
Where Monto Mario rises darkly deep,
Purple and proud against her native skies,
And there upon the summit lofty stand
Rich verdure tall and dark, in contrast too :
The little cloudlets float in the fair heav'n,
Each flying, floating—following the west—
Without is peace, ay, peace that earth can show.

Oh, Raphael ! heavenly gifted Raphael !
The glory of that sky thou soon shalt see,
The very air that melts around thee here,
The very air around thy pillow wafting,
Is incense from that land—immortal breath ;
And spirits from that spirit-land unseen
Fly around thee, with censors ever swinging.
By His decree, to calm thy soul in passing,
Thy Lord, thy Saviour holy, has been here,
Feeding thy soul and granting thy desires,
And ne'er again in this world will it thirst,

Nor hunger any more, for He has fed ;
He, who this very day, this very hour,
Offer'd Himself for thee on Calvary's Mount,
For all mankind's transgressions, once for all.
Thrice favour'd one, that on this holy day
By Him, thou should'st be call'd into thy Rest,
And this is peace the earth can never give.

Oh, Raphael ! noble painter, Raphael !
Yet will I linger, though unknown to thee ;
Sweet lie the flow'rets, spring's primeval gems,
Upon thy couch, fair Nature's earliest band,
Of the great Resurrection emblems true.
They in the dark, dank earth were pent so long
Within their prison, without light, so cold ;
But all was there, their leaves, their stems, and their
Young yellow flowers all in the dark earth.
Heaven rain'd on them her tears, her frozen-tears,
Her genial sunshine and her spring-time rain,
And in their time and by His great decree,
They burst in beauty—perfect works of God.
And thus with them, thus shalt thou ever shine
Before the world, thy soul the work of God,
Thus shalt shine as them, a star of day.

Oh, Raphael! heav'nly minded Raphael!
How calm thou liest, but thou long'st to see,
The perfect visions of thy mind not so,
The veil before thine eyes shall melt away.
Thy Saviour, and the angels thou shalt see,
Seraphs, and saints, and martyrs, all the host,
And there the Virgin Mary, mother bless'd,
Within that heavenly home so far from here,
That mortal mind may not conceive how blest.

Oh, Raphael! Heav'n-inspired Raphael,
Would I could see what thou beginn'st to see,
Thy soul within thee throbbeth, and its fire
Is burning up its tenements—there shines
Thy fair face with a radiance not of earth;
A ray of light from the half open'd door,
The gate of paradise, yes e'en from thence
Reflected on thy face in manhood's prime,
A ray that lights thy soul along the vale
That we call death. Fear not, He bids thee "Come
Or how could thy face shine, how could the Light
From the celestial portals shine on thee;
And angels, throngs of angels, with their wings
All radiant with that light, stoop o'er thee? All

The very air is crowded—legions wait
Within, without, around, to bear thee hence,
To that bright world that mortal mind cannot
Conceive how blest—what joy, what joy to see !

Oh, Raphael ! rarely gifted Raphael,
Yet will I linger still to think of thee,
And of thy life on earth, which seem'd a day ;
A day of spring, for in the spring-time rose
Thy sun upon thy sleeping city, Rome,
Winging its flight above a nation's hopes,
A nation's tears ; thus in their love thou walk'dst,
Treading the fields of fame with early steps,
Bidding its flowerets grow, its seedlings rise
At thy decree ; and with thy power thou brought'st
Them forth to live, to grow. We nourish them
For ever in the gardens of our soul ;
How could they die, unknown, unnoticed in
Thy nation's eyes, ere thy short race was run ?

Oh, Raphael ! blest, immortal Raphael,
Slowly thy sun sinks in time's ceaseless sea :
Yes, it will sink, but in its majesty
Leave in the golden west, a trace of gold ;

A trace that shall not fade, that shall not cease,
Or banish'd be by clouds of rolling years,
But shining ever pierce the past's dark veil,
A sun, whose shafts extend from earth to heaven.
And now thy bark is nearing to the shore,
And unseen spirits from the spirit world
Shall bear thee safely through into the land,
That silent land, where we all hope to go ;
But ere thou goest, immortal Raphael,
Leave on our hearts a trace like that thou leav'st
In the far west, a gold unfaded trace.

Oh Rome, oh Rome ! where are thy splendid
scenes ?

Where are thy sepulchres so grand to see,
Built up in years long lost, that are not now ?
Where are thy temples, and thy sculptured stones,
Thy walls adorn'd with thy sad scenes now past ?
Where is the race that trod their sacred floors,
That knelt in prayer before their marble shrines,
Where are they all ? Oh, sleeping Rome ! arise
Thou from thy sleep, and if thou canst not wake,
Walk in thy sleep, and thou shalt e'en behold
What time has borrow'd from thee in thy dreams ;

Thy name, thy honour'd name each lip lisp'd forth,
Each tongue confess'd, stood first on rolls of Fame.


Thy river Tiber, that once well'd o'er meads,
A deep, dark stream with broad expansive arms,
And on whose surface heaved victorious ships,
Now lies at rest, (if thou wouldst call it so,)
And in its stiller parts silently still
The flowering rushes flower, the lotus blooms,
And blooming far, and fair conceals from sight
The lizard and the newt within their homes.
At will they glide along o'er mossy stone,
At will they sleep (yet not, alas ! like thee)
Rock'd in the cradle of the lily flower ;
And in thy ruin'd temples what are there,
No breath save breathing of the balmy flowers,
No songs save these, the songs of wandering birds,
No light save these, the firelight of fireflies,
Sporting amid their towers with lighted wings,
Nought save the moon's pure beams piercing around,
Her shafts in holy pity all for thee.
Nought save the sun's sure splendid sea,
That make thy flow'ring flow'rets flow'r more fair,
Before they lay them down to die at eve,

Upon thy dewy desert dank and damp ;
Drinking the night dews ere they fall, those tears
That nature sheds in love o'er all her own :
No words save sighing whispers of the wind,
That fade unworded ere they reach the ear.

Oh, Rome, oh Rome! mute lie thy splendid scenes,
Yet there is one thing left indeed for thee,
There came from thee one morn a golden light,
A star rose o'er thee once one spring-time morn,
In the rich orient sky over thy plain,
And o'er thy ruins tho' they silent lie,
A day star that shall never, never set !



TOGETHER.

E walk'd along by the seaside,
List'ning unto the ebbing tide,
That murmur'd loud, then almost died.

We heard the bells chime merrily,
Like some old lay of minstrelsy,
That swept in chords of harmony.

We listen'd with deep joy of heart,
For to us both they did impart
Sweet sounds that through us sent a dart.

Rememb'ring how in childhood's days
We listen'd to those same sweet lays,
Whilst our young hearts join'd in with praise.

We saw a ship with silver sails,
Come with the tide and evening gales,
Laden with pine-wood from the vales

She bounded o'er the sea so fast,
Leaving behind her as she pass'd
Wave after wave ; she comes at last.

We saw the moon arise and shed
Her light around the holy dead,
That lie upon the ocean's bed.

And in the height of heaven she flew,
Making all things look pure and new,
On earth as in the heaven of blue.

The stars that lit the pallid skies
Outrival'd not my dear one's eyes.
We watch'd the evening mists arise,

And pacing 'long the sandy beach,
We each in turn rehearsed to each
The songs that we loved most to teach.

The murmuring sound of the salt spray
Sigh'd in the shells that round us lay,
Its farewell to the dying day.

We turn'd away, and then we heard
The singing of the evening bird,
The whispering winds around us stirr'd.

We heard the bleating from the fold ;
Whilst to the air the sweet flowers doled
Their perfume, o'er the fields we stroll'd.

We pass'd across the verdant lea,
Shining with glow-worms fitfully,
All things look'd bright and fair to me.

We walk'd among the trees and heather,
With hearts that soon would be together,
United, ne'er to part,—no, never !



SEPARATED.

TO E. J. L. BEYOND THE SEA.



O thee I love with all the purity
That God doth consecrate in hear
ours,
I dedicate a simple song of Love.

One lovely gleam of thy sweet sunny life,
Once, only once, shed radiance over mine ;
Not as a meteor flashing through the skies,
When all the world is hush'd into a sleep,
But as a living light unquenchable,
A star in mid-night, and a sun in day ;
Thus was thy presence once—so is it now.
Though thou thyself art gone and I am here ;
Though leagues of water, though long leagues of
And a great veil of mist, and waste of air,
Now separates me from thy dear embrace.

But can the mind be barrier'd, and can love
Be fetter'd with such guardians as these ?

Ah no, the mind is chainless, and the soul
Hath wings which are invisible—love soars
Through all—we cannot capture it, because
We cannot see what is invisible.

It turns, it comes to thee, belovèd friend ;
It takes what thy heart freely gives, it feeds
Upon thy gentle words, thy kind response ;
It flies o'er land and sea, it seeks no rest ;
It watches thee in darkness, morn and eve ;
It breathes Amen to all thy fervent prayers,
It asks a blessing from the living God,
Who made thy life such happiness to mine.
Ah ! if on earth we meet not face to face,
To see thy smile, to hear thy voice so clear
Singing thy native songs each morn and eve,
As once it was ; if the world disunites,
Death cannot : 'tis a narrow way that leads
To lasting love and lasting unity.

May God who gave to us the love of each,
And gave to each of us the love of Him,
Hereafter meet us in that land above,
Where there is no more sea to separate !

A MESSAGE FROM THE SEA.



THE dark clouds lower o'er Biscay's Bay,
The waves begin to roll,
The winds, in moaning echo stray
Far and around at close of day,
A sound of death they toll.

No star in heav'n is seen to gleam,
No light on earth below,
Save that which from a ship doth stream,
And that, a struggling fitful beam,
Showing a tale of woe.

Within that ship a host await
The first watch of the dawn ;
But no sign comes, and their sad fate
Is this, that ere the storms abate
From earth they will be gone !

Slowly the night seems passing by,
No hope is left to cheer ;
Louder the fearful wild winds sigh,
Furious the waves are tossing high,
Sure death is very near !

And when that awful sentence came,
There was no shriek or word ;
But knelt they all to breathe God's name,
Resign'd to Him, His rightful claim,
All who that summons heard.

Beneath they sank, the latest wave
Received her destined store ;
Now rest they in one common grave,
That band of England's own so brave,
To walk her isle no more.

* * * *

Lo, when the morning sun arose,
All, all had disappear'd ;
Nought now could trace the track of those,
Who 'neath lie wrapp'd in sweet repose,
For death they never fear'd.

Swift o'er the surface of the bay,
 Floated a little speck,³
Quite fearless of the water's sway,
For safe 'twas guided on its way
 From off the *London's* deck.

Regardless of the wide extent
 It flew to tell its tale,
Within its glassy shrine close pent,
So that the waves should not prevent,
 Nor make its mission fail.

And on it, as the sea-gull flew,
 She rested for awhile,
Ere o'er that wide expanse of blue
She sought a home, a dwelling new,
 Within a distant isle.

Safe past the gulf and sea-weed bed,
 Borne by the ocean's swell,
Onward to foreign shores it sped,
A voice,—a message from the dead,—
 Their very last farewell !

THE ABBEY OF LLANTHONY.



LONG, long ago in days gone by,
A knight named William found his
way

Into the valley, wide and drear,
Of the deserted Llanthony.

There he beheld the mountains high,
He heard the rivers ripple near ;
White cascades fall, and leap and dash,
Then hide awhile, then re-appear.

He view'd the wild birds in their flight,
Whirl vaguely round in search of prey,
He heard soft songs of joy and praise,
In the deserted Llanthony.

Steep rocks, deep ravines, meet his gaze,
Wild blossoms bloom beneath his feet,
High forest trees with sheltering boughs
Protect him from the noon-tide heat.

The azure sky above his head
Gleams with the golden orb of day,
Yet o'er those fields of unknown mete,
The silver cloudlets listless stray.

There tower'd the beeches, tall and strong,
There grew the oak, whose branches made
A shelter for the mountain goat,
Who loved to frolic 'neath its shade.

There spread the cedar's fragrant boughs,
Beneath the wild flowers sprung so sweet,
And as each zephyr swept the ground,
They laid their blossoms at his feet.

Seeing such glorious scenes, that spread
Before his eyes their charms untold,
Enraptured at the sights display'd,
Long, long he linger'd to behold.

Struck by God's power and goodness great,
Dismounted from his steed in haste,
And on the verdant sod he knelt,
And all the glowing glories faced.

A little hermit's cell he spied,
Conceal'd by Nature's verdant screen,
Paved with rich clusters of green moss,
While gentle sunbeams played between.

“Wanderer unknown, man of the world,
Confess thy faults, repent thy sin,
Forsake the pleasures of this earth,
This day a heavenly life begin !”

His hasty steps he thither bent,
Casting his armour on the ground,
Entering within its sacred walls,
His spirit wrapt in thoughts profound.

“God of all Love, Thy power unseen,
Thy hand in all Thy works I view,
Thy beauties spread o'er all the land,
Thy wonders and Thy works so true.

“Each flower that lifts its head so fair,
Each breeze that passes o'er the sky,
Each leaf that falls, each wave that rolls,
Whispers these sounds, ‘Our God is nigh!’”

Dismissing all his friends, he prayed
That thus to them might soon be given
The knowledge of the wondrous God,
And turn their thoughts from earth to Heav

Swift time has wrought a lasting change,
No longer does our young knight mount,
On well-train'd charger, free and bold,
Victory of field and fight recount.

Within a noble Abbey's walls
The vesper bell vibrates the air,
O'er the wild waste of Llanthony,
The monks repeat their hourly prayer.

With cross and beads hung by his side,
And in a garb of sombre grey,
Our youthful knight is oft-times seen
Within the walls of Llanthony.

* * * * *

Mouldering in silent ruin now,
Those ancient walls are, day by day,
But ever will these truths remain,
Of the wild wastes of Llanthony.⁴

ON READING "THE LIGHT OF STARS,"

BY H. W. LONGFELLOW.



THROUGH silent hours alone I sit
In grief, with wrong oppress'd ;
And like the dove in days of old,
My spirit finds no rest.

By the dim light of yonder lamp,
A book shines golden near,
I turn the pages, there I find
Words that I prize most dear !

" And thou too whomsoe'er thou art,
That readest this brief psalm,
As, one by one, thy hopes depart,
Be resolute and calm.

" Oh, fear not in a world like this,
And thou shalt know ere long,
Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer, and be strong."

It is enough, O poet wise,
 Though hope has fled for long,
I trust to learn what thou hast taught,
 " To suffer, and be strong."

Softly thy "consolations" came,
 Mortal reveal'd them not ;
It was thine own pure soul that spoke,
 Thyself that healing wrought.

Through my soul's portals enter guest,
 Come near and dwell awhile,
The cloud that dimm'd Hope's rising star
 Is banish'd by thy smile.

Thy "message" safely reach'd my land,
 Borne by the breath of heaven ;
The world had wrong'd, I mercy sought,
 That thou hast nobly given.


Such friendship is a holy tie
 That sympathy doth make,
Exalting o'er a "world like this,"
 For nought its chain can break.

So now across the restless main,
I'd send thee this brief sign
To show thee that thy words will live,
Within this heart of mine.

E'en to the wind that bore thine here
I now resign my lay ;
In safety may it reach thy hand,
God speed it on its way.



PEACE WITHIN.

HAT do ye see, O friends,
In the dim fire's form ?
What do ye hear, O friends,
In the raging storm ?

What do ye see within ?
Peace tokens glowing ;
What do ye hear without ?
Wildest winds blowing ;

What do ye see around ?
Nature all smiling ;
What, far, oh, far away ?
Autumn leaves piling ;

What in the raging sea,
With billows foaming ?
Like to a troubled heart
With grief bemoaning ;

What in that child's sweet face ?

No care nor sorrow ;

What if that bright place is

Vacant to-morrow.

Within all is calm and still,

Peace tokens glowing ;

Without it is raging hard,

Wildest winds blowing.

Friend, if thy own heart is

Heavy with sorrow,

Look through the raging storm

To a bright morrow.

Let the dim mountain wind

Answer thy story ;

Or the bright fire within

Glowing with glory !

Within is calm and still

Peace tokens glowing ;

And without soon shall cease

The wind that's blowing.

IDA DE VERE.

PART I.



IN yonder cottage rounded by broad elms,
Where slopes a mossy bank lit up with
flowers
(In Spring with violets, primrose, celandine,
In summer dotted with anemones,
In autumn with a deeper shade of leaves,
That eddies round the gnarled barks of beech,
Or fall upon the stream till winter's hand
Enshrines the soil).

Together there dwell three,
A lady and her Maud, her only one,
Who truly's very fair—a blushing maid,
And Ida, her step-daughter, grander far.
Over her shoulders, round her lovely arms,
Her rich dark tresses braid, or ripple waves,
Contrasting well against the loveliness
Of her broad marble brow of intellect,

As white as when Mont Blanc stands out to view
Against dark curls of cloud.

Her dreamy eyes

Oft wander in the mazy mysteries
Of days long lost, of years that will not come ;
Of that bright world where all the blest abide,
Their total lustre cannot shine till death
Will melt away the veils of sorrow there,
Made by the ceaseless rivers that arise ;
Her cheeks are pearly pale, with hectic spots,
As if a summer wind had borne along
A damask petal to repose on each.
No parents has she now, her father died
Two years ago, her mother long before.

Day after day goes round ; when work is done,
Over her lonely lot she broods forlorn ;
She may not wander in the neighbouring fields,
Or coppice, or e'en pace the river's rim,
Or to the church hard by the cottage door,
Till day declines and twilight hides the earth.
So then each Sabbath eve from flowers that bloom,
Around her casement, brier, and woodbine fair,
Jas'min and honeysuckle, mignonette,

She weaves a chaplet steep'd in many a tear ;
And ere her work is done they close their leaves,
Clasping therein her oft breathed one desire,
That when next morn their offering shall arise,
Hers too may mingle, lifted by their power.

Ah, well ! one eve, as home she slowly turn'd
From decking with a wreath her mother's grave,
(Alas ! poor Ida, sorrow seized her young),
With tearful face upturn'd she watch'd the stars
Melt through wide veils of cloud ; and the young
moon

Flooding the distant landscape with her light :
Sleep on each sleeping flower, each blade of green,
On each sequester'd nook, each moss-grown way,
Gleam on the old white walls of Castle Haut,
That rear'd its towers amid a belt of pine,
Lending a hallow'd light around the cross
That mark'd the spot where Ida's mother lay,
Reflect her shadow on the stream below
The bridge of stone just reach'd. Thus ran her
thoughts:

The world is fair, but He who made the world
Must fairer be. Oh God, I kneel awhile

To wait Thy pleasure, feel Thy holy smile,
As these sweet flowers of earth receive this light.

A gentle footstep makes the dewy blades,
As it goes by, spring up. Ah, it is Maud,
Who from her mother's room has stole away,
To meet the lonely girl, and lead her home.
And as they trace their steps with burning cheeks,
Maud softly tells, "that ere seven suns have set
She and Don Roderick never more will part.
"Ida, dear Ida, I have vow'd to love
With a deep love none other now but him ;
Then you shall see and know him good and brave,
And you shall dwell with us in Castle Haut,
And never soil these hands with work again."
(Pressing the tapering fingers as she spoke,)
" Will you not wish us lasting joys to come,
And a long life of peace to you and me,
Don Roderick, and my mother, whom I made
Promise to love you, poor, lone, orphan girl."

A few words more : they reach'd the portico,
Then Ida stooping down majestically,
Folded within her arms the fair young Maud,

And then replied: "Sister, for you I wish
 A peaceful life of love, a long life too ;
 But let me choose a simpler fate than this,
 The only hope that lives within my heart
 Is that my God would let me die whilst young."
 "Ah! could thou know'st not what thou'rt saying
 now."

Said Ida's step-mother, who sought for Maud :
 " Now go to rest, thy walk has tired thee much,
 And be not jealous of her noble lot.
 Thou wilt repent—let not such passions rise."
 " Mother, they are not wild or jealous thoughts,
 I long to die, and pray before I rest
 Each night that I may never waken more.
 Would I had gone before, it might have proved
 I am not jealous of Mand's noble lot."
 " Cease, thou must learn thy place, I will not have
 Rebellion in my house," again she said.

So Ida turn'd away—slow, wordlessly,
 And dream'd a dream, which proved her very words

PART II.

THE sixth sun fades, a rosy light appears,
Tinting the wavy clouds that westward lie,
Gilding the four old walls with latest rays ;
And idly at the open casement there
Stands Ida and young Maud to watch the scene.
The room is deck'd with festal wreaths of flowers,
Eve in descending draws all things of earth
Away from sight, that Heaven may solely shine ;
Thus teaching us to care for holier things,
When night, old age, and death come silently.

Apart Maud's mother sat, before the door
At spinning wheel, with distaff in her hand,
So that the whirl the noisy wheel sent forth
Might drown the voices of the two young girls :
So said she to herself, 'twill be the last
Day they together thus can spend, so I
Will let them be, it cannot matter much !
Such is their talk, Maud gently speaking first :
“ Oh, Ida, do you long to leave us all ?

I love you next to Roderick on this earth ;
Promise to dwell with me in Castle Haut,
Pledge with a kiss your truth, poor orphan girl !”

Ida replied in tones of graceful calm :
“ A dream has fortified my wish the more ;
That night I lay me down, six nights gone by,
I dream'd a dream—the earth became convulsed,
The casement parted, and the dark clouds roll'd,
Clashing with sounds quite terrible to hear,
And large red balls of fire shot earthward down
Into the sea that hiss'd and writhed again ;
Making vast steaming pillars upward go,
And all the land was darken'd, deeply dark ;
I heard you in distress cry wild and loud,
The world will perish, fearful look'd you then ;
And I too trembled at the awful sight !
And all my limbs became convulsed soon ;
But sudden in the midst I felt a hand,
Press'd lightly on my brow, a hand so soft ;
Turning, I heard a small voice say to me,
' Ida, didst thou not say that thou wouldst die ?'
A calm came o'er me like of old, as when
Christ rose and still'd the Lake of Galilee :

Then I remember'd, and I gently knelt,
Folding my hands together humbly pray'd,
'Such is my wish, but spare Maud yet awhile !
To-night I fain would go, my God,' I cried.
In shining robes of white with radiant wings,
A messenger of God stoop'd slowly o'er ;
Drew from his robe a lily white as wool,
And as I pray'd it open'd, when I ceased
It closed again, shedding a fragrance round :
With countenance lit up with holy love,
The angel smiled, and issued 'mid the gloom
Into the outer darkness ; for the earth
Still trembled with God's power.

But as it pass'd

A lingering light illumed its airy way,
(When mortals leave this earth no trace is seen,)
But as the portals of the gate it reach'd,
The dark clouds furl'd away, the thunder ceased,
And Heaven gaped wide apart to win him back.
Lo ! I beheld awhile the world unseen :
There shone the jacinth, and the sardis stone,
The beryl, emerald, and the topaz pale,
Blent in a rainbow'd light, they blazed and glow'd
In light more dazzling than a thousand stars,

Or sun that just attain'd meridian height,
Without a cloud to blur or blind its gilt ;
The angel pass'd, but not without one look,
One gesture, that my soul could well translate
Was meant for it.

'Twas heavenly to the last,
For sounded forth a strain of highest praise ;
Its echo seem'd to reach from pole to pole.
Then I awoke, the vision pass'd away,
I heard the choir chant low the matins mass,
Now canst thou doubt? dear Maud, weep not for me."

PART III.

THE morn rose fair on fair Maud's wedding-day,
A rosy light paints deep the eastern rim,
Lying on lacy clouds that veil'd the sun,
Gilt dazzling orb, just climb'd a mountain peak,
The lark arose to carol forth his lay
From out his nest screen'd by the dewy flowers ;
The tide came gently swelling up the beach,
Anon the white flag from the castle tower,

Floated at will upon the scented breeze,
And peace seem'd breathed by nature and by God.

But the young heart of Maud beat tuneless time,
And sad was she though all things favour'd her,
When in her bridal dress she was array'd
Long 'fore the chimes of the cathedral rang,
She pass'd to call dear Ida, wondering why
She had not come, she had not woke before :
Lifting the latch that fasten'd back the door,
She sped with light steps to the snowy couch
Where Ida slept.

 Around there came sweet scent,
Caused by the garland made of lily flowers
That Maud had given to deck her raven hair ;
Maud, kneeling, look'd long at the placid face
And then with swelling heart she softly said,
" Ida, my Ida, wake, awake dear one,
Hast thou forgot it is Maud's wedding day ?"
Oft she repeated this, but no reply
Came from those seal'd lips of pallid hue ;
Though long she gazed with wildly beating heart,
No eyelid sever'd to return her smile.
Maud stretch'd to take the hand that held the
 flowers,

But, oh ! 'twas cold and white, and senseless too,
Rigid and stiff never to hold again
An earthly offering of her pure young love.

Maud turn'd to tell her tale in agony,
And as she turn'd, there in the doorway stood
Don Roderick, statue-like, appall'd, amazed ;
He did not near to own th' elected bride,
Who rose as sweetly as the young flowers rise,
When in the east their god appears to reign ;
But drew forth a medallion cased in gold,
Diamond, and ruby, and the beryl blue,
Advancing to the couch, glanced at the form,
And then upon the wondrous work of art,
And then at Maud with a stern look that pierced
Her sad soul through, ay, to its very core.
Then passing to the next room where, apart,
Maud's mother linger'd waiting for the chime :
“ Woman, what hast thou done,” Don Roderick
said ;
“ How couldst thy lying tongue deceive me thus
Didst thou not tell me Maud was Ida ?—speak !
Didst thou not plead, with thy beguiling way,
To call her Maud, a small and simple 'quest,

As Ida was thy husband's first wife's name ;
Made me consent to this and not to speak
Of that blest name, so dear among the dead ?
How could thy wicked heart conceive such sin,
Knowing that on the battle plain afar
I vow'd to wed the maiden young and pure,
The gentle Ida born to Jean de Vere ? ”
Then she did blush with shame, and mutter'd forth
About “ a mother's love exceeding all,”
And how “ she loved her own, and sought for one
To love and keep her Maud when she was gone ; ”
And how “ she trusted him above all men,
And deem'd it was not sin with such an aim.”

And then young Maud crept slowly to the door
In wild dismay, in wonderment and fear,
Hearing in agony her mother's words,
Till suddenly it dawn'd within her mind
The vivid, hateful truth that had been held
So long from her in realms of mystery.

PART IV.

SOON, one by one, the bridesmaids softly came,
And lightly trod the chamber of the dead ;
And then one whisper'd to the weeping Maud,
" Let us convey her to the chancel rails ;"
And thus it happen'd—on a silver bier
They laid the gentle Ida,—passing—stole
Right up the village, through the Rue de Crois
The bride's procession, now a funeral train.
And the loud chime of the cathedral bells
Was changed into a low and mournful toll ;
Soon all the bridesmaids knelt around awhile,
And pray'd for the repose of Ida Vere.
And from the organ in soft swelling sound,
Issued a requiem and a holy chant.
The tapers glared and mark'd the hallow'd spot
When night descended.

When the next morn beam'd,
Again the mourners stole in robes of white,
And seal'd the coffin ne'er to ope again.
Such was the custom of the land she lived ;
And laid her low among the many mounds,

Maud and Don Roderick following in the train.
But ere the earth conceal'd that lovely one,
Each maiden brought a wreath of lily flowers,
That the sweet offering that arose from them
Might reach the clouds that westward glided by.
Thus, too, it seem'd that with their incense rare,
The soul of Ida found her yearn'd for home.


* * * * *

Then Maud dwelt long within the convent walls,
And took the veil, and lived in peace for long ;
But never could her living heart forget
Ida or Roderick of the Castle Haut ;
Her love, a lasting and abiding love,
Consumed her life away unceasingly,
But she would never wed a mortal now,
Her heart was broken, torn from earthly joy.
Her mother died confessing all her sin,
With deep regret, but nought can be retraced
When death demands its due.

All scatter'd now,
Don Roderick fought in lands far, far away,
Dauntless and daring, for this goaded him.
And often when the evening sun sunk low,

And flooded all the distant gliding scene,
And tall dark pines that clasp'd the convent walls,
Making long shadows form on slanting sward,
All tangled rank with reed and thistle bed,
Where dwelt the moor-hen and the water-fowl
Amid the sedgy pools ; the golden barge
That would have led the bride amid the bowers
Of hanging cliffs or wiry willow shade,
Maud wander'd lonely, as a lonely star
Wanders from cloudy region into clear,
Unto a grassy mound, to place thereon
A chaplet of the flowers that Ida loved ;
Till tears came up, and sighs came thick and fast,
And winds commenced to blow about the leaves ;
She dared not think of what had pass'd long since,
So when those visions rose and compass'd her,
She turn'd and track'd the silent moss-grown way ;
But ever turning paused to read those words,
" Beneath this mound lies Ida, call'd of God."

THE DAISY'S LAMENT.

HAT means all this? is this the native
spot
Where I so early bloom'd? and now to
die!

To perish, and so soon to be forgot,
No more to blend my beauty with the sky!

That on my little head all crown'd with gold,
Which Nature in her kindness gave to me,
There should be placed on it a stone so cold,
And a great heavy load of masonry.

I've drank the crystal dew, that from the earth
Has risen in light around my joyous dreams;
I've kiss'd the wanton winds, as they have pass'd;
And gazed in rapture at the moon's bright beams.


The heavens have dropp'd their tears upon my brow,
The lark has sung to me her sweetest song,
The bee has sipp'd the nectar from my cup,
Or stopp'd and rested as he flew along.

My little ones have wreathed the tresses fair
Of the light hearts that gaily tread the lea,
Have soothed the sad ones with their modest grace,
And charm'd their sadness into joy and glee.

Farewell ! beloved spot, a last farewell !
A parting far too sad for all to know.
I lay me down to die ; the distant knell
Sounds in mine ear, " Man's fate is even so ! "



LOVE'S PRE-EMINENCE.

 WAS summer, and o'er land and lea
The fragrant wild-flowers grew,
Mingling in one high jubilee,
A silent song in harmony
Beneath a sky of blue.

From out the dingle came the notes
Of birds from warmer climes,
The throstle, chaffinch, and white-throats ;
And too, across the long dry moats,
We heard the distant chimes.

We wander'd far along the fields,
And pass'd the lanes hard by,
Where oft the fairy field-flower wields
Its tiny arms around and shields
The dew-drops when they die.

There o'er the corn-land swept the breeze,
 Melodious, soft, and low ;
Dying beneath the wild wood trees,
That echoed to their symphonies
 Far in the vale below.

And sporting in the sunny light
 The dragon-flies quick gleam ;
Beside the river running bright,
The flags and rushes stood upright,
 Proud barriers to the stream.

No traveller met we ; quite alone
 We trod those paths once more ;
But in the air fond words long flown,
Mingled in every voice and tone,
 A loved and hoarded store.

The memory of our love's lost days,
 Buried in tears and sighs,
Brightly shone round us with soft rays,
Till all things seem'd to hymn the praise
 Of love that never dies.

For all is changed since that bright day
Save that one gift so true,
Floweret and tree hath seen decay,
Birds to their homes have wing'd away,
Clouds veil'd the sky of blue.

True love's a mystery profound,
In death it will not cease,
Those hearts that once on earth it bound,
In heaven hereafter will be found
In everlasting peace.



THE LONELY BOWER.



SAT alone within my bower,
The shades of night came creeping on,
Around me, and from everything,
They bade the sun's bright ray begone.

Over the mountain first I saw
The giant with its mantle grey,
Disclose from each one as it pass'd
The glories of the bygone day.

Then through the trees it came, it came,
Over the stream that glided by ;
Through the forest and winding glen,
Over the old church tower high.

The stately trees it hid them all,
Every path and every flower,
Every dwelling, hedge, and hill,
Then round unto my lonely bower.

It ask'd me not, but in it came,
Then over me its mantle threw,
Shut from mine eyes the latest ray
That lit my bower with golden hue.


A gloomy fear crept o'er my soul,
As it folded me within its power,
And every thing that round me lay,
Quite lone was I within my bower.

The bells chimed out the passing hour,
Tremblingly o'er the landscape grey,
Leaving in haste my lonely bower,
My heart yearn'd for returning day



THE VISION OF ST. BARBARA.

"Be thou faithful until death, and I will give thee
a crown of life."

 WITHIN her tower she stood alone :
Within, a pensive mood stole o'er,
A pensive mood—not of earth's things,
But such would soul-like peace restore.

For, as she gazed, all forms of earth
Sped quickly from her inward sight,
The wall divided, and appear'd
A vision—heavenly and bright.

She saw her Father's throne on high,
She saw the gates of paradise,
She saw blest throngs of angels kneel,
She heard their prayer and praises rise.

When theirs had ceased, fresh legions came,
Fresh praises rung through courts on high,
And those who had their part fulfill'd,
Issued in numbers through the sky.

Straying o'er fields of verdure there,
Where flowers bloom not known to earth;
They cull'd the fairest budding seen,
They cull'd the blossoms of most worth.

Weaving a chaplet as they rose,
Weaving a chaplet fair and white,
The thronging multitudes again
Knelt once more in our Father's sight.

Then at a word of His command,
Two gently to her tower descended,
And placed the wreath upon her brow,
And listen'd as her prayer ascended.

They folded her within their robes,
They flung their silver wings around,
They shielded her on every side,
Their golden harps sent forth soft sound.

And when her prayer had died away,
They said, "Thou shalt return on high;
When Christ shall call thee from this earth,
We'll bear thy spirit through the sky.

“ This wreath is thine, and thou shalt wear
 It on thy brow that happy day ;
 We'll keep it near our Father's throne,
 For heavenly blossoms ne'er decay.”

Gently she bow'd her head awhile,
 And cried, “ No more, no more delay,
 Oh let me now return with thee,
 My spirit longs to flee away.

This life seems long, hour after hour
 In dark captivity I pine ;
 I never hear the sound of tongues,
 I never see the bright orbs shine.”

“ Wait, wait a little longer here,
 Thy work is not quite finish'd yet ;
 Soon all thy trials shall pass away,
 Soon all thy sorrow thou'lt forget ;

“ There thou shalt hear the choirs that sin
 Incessant in our Father's sight ;
 And thou shalt need no sun, for Christ
 Is there the Everlasting Light.

“ Each painful moment thou dost bear
 Shall be to thee an endless gain,
And every victory won through faith
 Shall lead thee onward in His train.

“ Till death prove true, whate’er betides ;
 If faithful to the end, thou’lt see
Thy journey here is but a day
 Compared unto eternity.”

They took the wreath from off her brow,
 They bore it to the Father’s throne,
She gazed, she long’d, but they were gone,
 Quite vanish’d--she was left alone.

Then once again the forms of earth
 Appear’d unto the outward sight ;
The wall closed round ; in dreams alone
 Would re-appear that heavenly sight.

THE DEPARTING SPIRIT.

A MYSTICAL ODE.

I.



DIM sound was heard from without the
walls,
As the sun sunk at even ;
And the long winds came with their loudest calls,
The clouds of heaven were riven,
And the ocean heard a tumultuous swell,
For thickly and fastly the rain then fell.

II.

Soon came there boom of the cannon and gun,
With wild noisy shouts and words,
The wail of the muffled drum had begun,
And the flash of helms and swords ;
And the lightning and thunder rolling high,
Far, far, and all around exultingly.

III.

But at the approach of the midnight hour,
 Within was a softer gleam ;
A scene that could check e'en a tyrant's power,
 As it is check'd in a dream ;
When instead of the wrathful words would flow
Repentance true, and sorrow long and low.

IV.

No clamour within disturb'd the still peace,
 All, all, was so silent there ;
The captive humbly sought for a release,
 In a penitential prayer :
All was so sweetly calm within those walls,
No banners deeply dyed, no deathly palls.

V.

Nought is heard save the tears that gently rain
 Like dew on leaves at even,
And holy words breathed oft and oft again
 From a just soul forgiven ;
Seraph and angel and a heavenly band,
Await the summons of their God's command.

VI.

And deeds of love, and fiery conquests won,
Shine out with a radiant light ;
While the transgressions of the Past have gone
As a cloud blotted from sight :
Now the Future shines like a star of old,
And leads the wanderer on to the true Fold.

* * * *

VII.

The morning dawns, but all the sounds are gone,
E'en without is silent now,
The clouds, the thunder, and the flood have flown,
The tide of the sea is low,
A glorious rainbow is seen around,
Far o'er the hills, but neither voice nor sound ;

VIII.

Ay, no sound from without, no sound within,
All is deserted and drear ;
All the wailing noise of a world of sin ;
Could not wake that soul to fear ;
For the tenant had left his house of clay,
And had flown to the realms of Endless Day.

THE MAID OF WEISSENBURG.

I.



HE lean'd from her lattice when the sun
was low,
She watch'd her lover through the
twilight dim ;
And in her solitude 'twas joy to know
He treasured much the heart she gave to him.

II.

She lean'd from her lattice, and she heard the sound
Of warriors marching in a grand array ;
At midnight they encamp'd upon the plains
That near her lonely castle silent lay.

III.

She lean'd from her lattice when the battle waged,
There were vast armies, though she saw but one :
At eventide when victory was proclaim'd,
Her lover young and brave was dead and gone.

IV.


She lean'd from her lattice, and she saw long mounds,
Deck'd rudely with a flowret here and there ;
To Heaven she lifted up her eyes and wept,
“ Oh take me also,” was her anguish'd prayer.

September 29th, 1870.



THE CAPTIVE.

I.

E have parted for ever—he and I ;
Alone we must live, alone we must die.
He's taken captive where daylight's
denied,
Better, far better in war to have died,
Better, far better in war to have died.

II.

Far, far away is the fortress so rude,
Where he mourns in his gloomy solitude,
When skies are clear and when earth is gay,
I can see the bastions over the bay,
I can see the bastions over the bay.

III.

The high waves follow and wet my feet,
And they moan out loudly, “Retreat, retreat,
A barrier strong we lay down for thee,
Never shalt thou cross the great mighty sea,
Never shalt thou cross the great mighty sea.”

IV.

One morn a vessel came over the bay,
Bearing a message for me (so they say),
That he whom I loved was lost and dead,
Dying he wish'd I another would wed,
Dying he wish'd I another would wed.

V.

But I laid me down, longing too to die,
On the shingle beach, with the waves full high :
And I thought they would take me in my sleep,
And drown my life out in the restless deep,
And drown my life out in the restless deep.

VI.

But I dream'd a dream, and I heard a voice
That made my sorrowful heart to rejoice ;
" The tyrant's fallen, and a king doth reign,
Who has broken a link in each captive's chain,
Who has broken a link in each captive's chain."

Sept. 29th, 1870.

THE EVE BEFORE THE MASSACRE
OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW.

(*August 24, 1572.*)

FROM A PICTURE—"THE HUGUENOT LOVERS."

BY J. MILLAIS, R.A.



HE leaves with summer rain were wrestling
there
Upon the long low orchard wall and the
Purple plum, and golden gourd mingled
Neglected on the moisten'd tufts of rich
Velveted moss, that found its way amid
The loosely fitted stones. The evening birds
Twitter'd their latest carols to their mates,
Or sung their fledglings soberly to sleep.
A place of peace it was, that lengthen'd league
Of cultivated land, enchain'd all round
By fruited firs, and shimmering alder-trees,
By flowers whose fragrance laded the night airs,
Descending delicately over all ;
A place of peace amid a world of woe.

From out her chamber came, in rich attire,
A lovely maiden of a queenly mien,
Yet from her lustrous loving eyes there shone
Deep signs of sadness and anxiety ;
Her face was pale, her golden hair fell back
In waves of glorious light from round her brows.

She pass'd by portal, pont, and prim parterre,
Across the rippling runnel as it lay
Swollen and shining through a lengthen'd growth
Of grass and rushes and green trellises ;
A shower of many leaves fell now and then,
One lonely white moss-rose, out-rivalling all,
Her pathway intercepted ; quickly she
Did gather it, just budding to a bloom
Of excellence ; and as she walk'd she watch'd
An insect feed upon its petals pure,
Or wander in its perfumed labyrinth,
Crouch down at last and sleep its life away.

Onward by stealth she near'd the orchard wall,
Her pale face flush'd with sweet surprise. Her
heart
Beat wildly, a dim form she knew stood there,

That one, that only one, that made her life
A life to hoard, whose very presence joy'd.

* * * * *

Deeply and secretly a plot was laid
To murder every Huguenot upon
The soil of France, to slay without regard
To youth, or beauty, or maturer age ;
To kill in barbarous acts of cruelty
The unprepared, defenceless ; and the king
Was to give forth the signal, by his will
This deed of darkness should permitted be ;
But all those maintaining firm the Faith
That universally had been maintained
Throughout the realms of France by royal blood,
Should on their left arm wear a scarf of white,
That they the massacre might safe evade.
Oh France, beware ! slay not the innocent,
Lest their voice cry in vengeance to the skies,
Lest their pure blood descend and rest upon
Thy head perpetually, and thy desire
To lay life low, shall one day cause thy fall.

And there in close and secret converse stood

These two together ; many months had roll'd
Over their life of love, an even tide,
And the great promise of a future joy
Had in the hour of solitude so oft
Gilded alike the reveries of each :
She was a Roman Catholic, and he
A Huguenot, yet still their hearts
Were bound by many ties of sympathy.

Hour after hour slid by, the sun was gone,
And twilight lull'd awhile the noise of day ;
Out from the azure arch the burning stars
Gleam'd like so many gems ; a slight west wind
Fann'd a more heavenly lustre unto them,
And overhead a vine incessantly
Shook down a shower of sombre tinted leaves :
“ Oh, not farewell for ever,” she replied,
Catching his words in breathless agony :
“ But let my life while yet it linger on,
Be gilded with the glory of thine own ;
What ! wilt thou leave me lone and desolate,
To struggle through life's warfare without *thee*,
To long for death that will not come at will ;
Nay, let me bind this scarf upon thine arm,

That *I* may save thee, and should it be wrong,
For such a deed I will be answerable."

Gently he drew her near until her face,
All lit with love's sweet passion, purified,
Fell closely to his own, and raising up
One hand kept back the glorious waves, and one
The act of blinded love prohibited.
Then gazing down, his dark eyes linger'd on
Those blue diviner orbs, enshrined in tears.
And to each other spake they wordlessly,
That language love alone interprets ;
So tenderly she pleaded for her will,
For the acceptance of her sacrifice :
And o'er the marble beauty of her face
The gentle blushes came continually,
Like the rich glow of summer sunset on
Those mountains crown'd with coronets of snow.
He bent his head in reverent attitude,
And from those carven lips (that but so late
In solitude pour'd forth their prayers to God
For firm adhesion to the Faith, and for
Strength for the coming combats) from those lips
Came calm, kind words, for thus he answer'd her :

" Sweet maiden, thy dear life hath been to me
The one and powerful tie to keep me free
From every worldly craving, thy designs
Have ever led me onward to pursue
That loftier existence that the soul
So often seeks, but seeks in vain to win.
Let the wise God who gave unto the world
So great a gift, in thee be glorified
By thy endurance, leading others on.
Thou wouldst not wish to thwart His just decree,
Who doeth all things well, and doth create
Us to work out His sovereign will, and then
When the brief task is over, gently He
Doth call us to a home of rest and peace.
Yes, we must part for ever upon earth,
'Thy teaching and thine admonitions will
Be with me in death's latest agony ;
And thou must linger on in hope and prayer,
Alone through all life's cruel necessities.
God bless thee, give thee strength, and at the last
Call thee so gently home, show He hath in
The furnace of affliction chosen thee."

WINTER.



ALL around is calm and still,
Nature's robed in purity ;
Every stream and every rill
Lies in sweet tranquillity.
All the trees, in armour clad,
Brave the bitter wintry blast,
For their sapling seeming sad,
Till the keen white frost is past ;
Wide their sheltering arms expand,
Whilst the young ones crouch beneath,
As around the wide, wide land
The snow it forms a pure white wreath.

It was dawn, and scarce the sun
Had pierced the snow clouds of the east,
E'en ere the day had yet begun,
For hardly had the night wind ceased ;

The air was keen and clear around,
Deep silence it was lingering yet,
The snow untrodden on the ground,
A scene too lovely to forget.

Before my sight the landscape lay,
Far o'er the meadow, lea, and stream,
Far o'er the hills a golden ray
Broke o'er their verge as in a dream.
Over the sky of sober grey
There spread a tinted roseate hue,
Till all things that out-stretchèd lay
Before me wore the same bright hue.

Ah ! summer time may make us gay,
And spring may fill the heart with glee,
And autumn may command a lay,
But winter's glories are for me.
For pure and spotless is his robe,
And calm and silent are his ways,
A silver moonlight tints his night,
Though short, yet pleasant are his days.

AT BOUGIVAL.

A TRUE INCIDENT OF THE PRESENT CAMPAIGN

OCT. 1870.



ESTING after battle fray
From the toil and strife and heat,
Where the lengthen'd shadows lay,
There a Northman found retreat.

Unto him a little child,
Shyly, coyly, first came near,
As on her his kind face smiled
Wore away her childish fear.

Soon she play'd around his knee,
Sang and prattled, climb'd and kiss'd,
And in happy, earnest glee,
Laid her face on his in rest.

Deck'd his gun and medal bright
With the daisies round and small,
Laughing out in high delight,
When they now and then would fall.

And the French girl's flaxen hair,
That in curls would wanton stray,
O'er her brows with tender care
Would the Northman lift away.

Oft he press'd her to his heart,
Told her in his foreign tongue
How the war had made him part
From his home and babies young.

Told her that her gentle ways
Made him love her, for she brought
Gleams of visionary days
Living in his present thought.

Told her she was very fair,
Like a lovely little flower,
That gave fragrance to the air
Round some weary captive's bower.

Said she was a little stream
 Wandering through a desert deep,
Such as comes within a dream,
 When the parch'd lips drink in sleep.

Arm in arm along the street,
 Friends in converse came, but they
Stopp'd awhile to rest and greet,
 Watch'd the child and warrior play.

“ Would that she thy words might know,
 And thy meaning comprehend,”
They remark'd, then sighing slow,
 Rose to reach their journey's end.

But the blue-eyed Northman smiled,
 “ Ah, she understands it well,
Far away I've wife and child
 Of mine own,” then bright tears fell.

Where his Fatherland was placed,
 Where the Rhine's blue waters crept,
Where the linden's shadows graced,
 Turning round, in silence wept.

Mused what joy to clasp again
Wife and babies to his heart,
And to tell no cruel war
Would again cause them to part.

* * * *

Three brief days of hope and fear,
Three brief suns arose and set,
Victory was proclaimed, how dear
Victory's price, and glory's debt!

In a dingy darken'd room,
Stain'd with guiltless blood, there lay
In the awful deathly gloom
The fair Northman kill'd in fray.

And his folded fingers press'd
All the faded daisies down,
That still lingering on his breast
To his medal form'd a crown.

On his youthful features spread
Long, a calm and holy smile,
And although his lips were dead
Love play'd round them all the wh

For, the sweet, sad accents lost
Of their latest prayer, was this,
That the great angelic host
Might protect the fatherless.

That the God would grant them grace
In a happy land above ;
And unite them face to face
In the glory of His love.

Then he pray'd that peace once more
To the Fatherland might come,
And his spirit sought the shore
Of a brighter, better home.



GERALDINE.



GAZED from my castle turret,
Over the mountain's height :
All over the peaks were glowing
The clear, cold, morning light.

Scarcely had the shining brightness
Of the pale moon's pure beam
Left the wide heaven above us,
I awakened from a dream.

To the east the bright clouds floated,
So gloriously there,
Silently passing, bore with them
Every half-whisper'd prayer.

The rosy tints of the morning
Extended far and wide ;
And soon all the mountain grandeur
Was richly crimson-dyed.

The lark rose from her first nestling
To greet the heavens fair,
The flowers lifted their heads and gave
Sweet incense to the air.

The birds in the branches chanted
Their first songs to the skies ;
Whilst the rosy tints fast spreading
All around did arise.

Nature stood still for to witness,
Peace sat upon her throne ;
Oh ! I gazed in joyous rapture,
Seeming no more alone.

All the cloudlets gather'd nearer,
Their monarch to obey,
And they each bow'd down in homage
Before the golden ray.

Then, crown'd in a lovely splendour,
Quite regally array'd,
Floating away past the mountain,
Over the heather stray'd.

Then, rising up in its glory,
The golden sun appear'd :
Wide through the peaks of the mound
Closer its beaming near'd.

Reaching my lone castle turret,
Piercing the corridor,
It fell in a chequer'd brightness
Across my marble floor.

Then far away in the distance
A dim form seem'd to rise—
And I gazed and gazed in sadness,
Till tears well'd to mine eyes.

For aye ! it was one who sleepeth
In the cold silent ground,
Whose fair image ever haunts me
As I look on that mound.

E'en as I stand by my window,
That dear one's grave I see,
Her face it will live for ever,
Deep in my memory.

Time will not ever efface it,
Others alter it not,
Death and Love have united that
Which cannot be forgot.

In haste I sped from my castle
To wreathe the lonely grave,
And I linger'd there in silence
With her I sought to save.

A small voice within me whisper'd,
Why grieve so much, lone heart?
Thou shalt soon follow, and with her
Rest, and from hence depart.

Why grieve so much where around thee
Peace speaks? it is thy fate;
Think not thy Guardian Angel
Will leave thee desolate.

Look at the glories before thee,
See how far they expand,
In faith send forth thy petition,
Wait for the moving Hand.

DELPHINE.

PART I.

ABSENCE.



NE autumn eve the glorious sun declined;
Far the rich west with golden light was
lined.

Splendid the contrast that the trees display'd,
That for the last were in rich beauty 'ray'd.
It was in France, e'en that delightful land
Where Nature's children in rich glory stand,
Live, and each day more beautiful appear,
Displaying sights that do command a tear :
For it seems sad to think they pass away,
Hourly their splendour fleets—too swift decay.
(But so it is, and we must not complain,
For we ourselves would not for e'er remain.)
This was the lesson that the orb had given,
As on that autumn eve it sunk from heaven.

From out a castle window, grand and high,
Two forms were seen, both gazing on the sky.
The elder, Lady Marie, dark was she,
Stately and proud, yet bent she gracefully.
Over her daughter, whose pale, weary brow
Told plain her hidden grief and sorrow now.
Gently she laid her aching head to rest
In sweet repose upon her mother's breast ;
The tear-drops glisten'd in her mild blue eyes,
And now and then there faintly came sad sighs :
Her heart was in much agony and strife,
Continual conflicts wore away her life ;
All hope was lost in Time's tempestuous wave,
And rest there was none here, save in the grave.

The crowds had left the gardens, and the street
Was now deserted by all busy feet ;
But still our noble lady stood awhile,
To soothe her daughter with her winning smile.
Fondly she loved Delphine, so fair, so young,
And grieved to think that sorrow e'en had sprung
Within her heart so soon, so tender yet,
But when the heart once loves, can it forget ?

Sudden the maiden raised her weary head,
And cried in wild despair, " Oh, is he dead :
How longer will the war in land away
Hold him a slave, a captive ? mother, say !
When will his voice resound within our walls,
That voice that oft to me such peace recalls ?
Am I to die so young, so soon to go,
Resigning all I love on earth below ?"
" Ah, no ! my child, all will in time prove well,
Ease thy sad mind, and all thy sorrows quell :
To-day in foreign lands a truce is sign'd,
In patience wait, my daughter ; be resign'd !"
And as the lady spoke she turn'd away,
Leaving Delphine alone, to weep and pray.

PART II.

THE MEETING.

THREE weeks had pass'd away, and in the west
Gloriously still the bright sun sunk to rest.
One morn as Delphine walk'd the rich parterre,
Studded with blossoms beauteous and rare,

Swiftly through mazy paths she tripp'd along,
Singing in sweetest voice his favourite song,
And culling fairy flowers of gentle hue,
Blending their contrast exquisitely true,
A sound was heard that check'd her tuneful song
(E'en as an avalanche when all along
Mountains it rolls at its free will below,
Till it is stopp'd by peaks of lasting snow.)
Thus ceased her song, and through her frame there
 came
A trembling fear, a feeling e'en the same,
E'en such as oft had seized her heart before ;
It was Sir Arthur whom she heard and saw.

And as he near advanced, her glowing cheek
Told all, and more than tongue had power to speak :
And soon again her trembling hand he prest,
And then consented to her coy request .
To choose a lily from her *corbeille pleine*.
Long had he wish'd to hear her voice again,
Long had he wish'd to gaze on beauty rare,
For she was graceful, sweet, and strangely fair ;
As they return'd, he spoke to her fond heart,
Telling her war no more would make them part.

Sign'd was a truce, and all the soldiers free,
Captive and slave, both set at liberty.
There, too, he told her, how, when far away,
Her smile had cheer'd him on through all dismay :
List'ning with great intent to all she heard,
Though she herself responded not a word ;
Her well-stored basket hung upon her arm,
Mingling its perfume with the morning balm—
An offering to her mother—whom she spied
Advancing near, close by the water-side.
Soon as the lady saw her lovely child
By Arthur's side, faintly she bow'd and smiled.

Together now the knight and lady spake,
Entering the castle : there bade him take
The early meal prepared for friend and guest ;
Courteous the knight received her kind request.

PART III.

THE SONG.

HAPPY is Delphine now, for high delight
Passes her time away each day and night.

In that fair garden of the Tuileries
Where gaudy flow'rets bloom, where lofty trees
Cast their deep shadow on the emerald grass,
The crowds unceasing and unnumber'd pass ;
Grand are the fountains, and they far display
Rich colours, almost bright as rainbow's ray.
Near flow'd the Seine, whose gentle waters stray'd
Like truant children o'er the upland glade ;
Rising above its surface, green and clear,
Shyly the flag and water-lily peer ;
Mark'd were the colours that all Nature wore,
For soon the autumn season would be o'er ;
The leaves of scarlet, crimson, purple, brown,
Fell on the paths in fitful showers down.
But the whole scene was beautiful to see,
No care was there amid that company.
Delphine was there, Sir Arthur by her side,
Together at an even pace they ride ;
Sweet were the words he said, her beaming eyes
Told all she felt, and banish'd all her sighs.

Swiftly the fleeting time roll'd on its way,
And chilly winds foretold the close of day ;
Quickly their steeds together homeward-bound,

And soon kind Lady Marie there they found
With other guests, in splendid robes attired :
To dine in Castle Blanche they all retired.

Soon after follow'd songs and music grand
By guests, and then Sir Arthur press'd the hand
Of Delphine, bidding her to sing the song
He had not heard her sing for months so long.
Consenting rose, with blush upon her face,
And by her well-tuned harp she took her place.
Sweetly she sang ; the notes so soft and clear
Linger'd melodious on each heart and ear,
Higher and higher now her sweet voice rung
In tones more rich than she had ever sung.
These were the words with which, that joyous night
All hearts she fill'd with rapture and delight :

France, my own land ! where all
Pleasures do reign,
Peace be within thy wall,
Banish'd all pain.

Should e'er the war-notes break
Over thy land,

Standard of victory take,
Glorious and grand.

Fair are thy scenes, I know,
Fair to the sight ;
Gently thy rivers flow,
Sparkling and bright.

Far are thy treasures seen
Blooming around ;
Vineyards are full and green,
Now they are crown'd

Thick with the fruitful vine,
Purple and white :
France, fair France, land of mine,
Once more, Good Night.

PART IV.

AU REVOIR.

FAST now approach'd the time when young Delphine
Was to become Sir Arthur's bride and queen ;

The eve before the day, she went to seek
Her mother, and few words of comfort speak.
Walking through corridors and marble halls,
That echoed strangely with her faint footfalls,
She found her mother sitting quite alone
Within her turret room ; with sweetest tone
Young Delphine spake, then took her favourite seat
Upon the stool that raised the lady's feet.

“ What makes you sorrow now,” she gently said,
“ When on to-morrow morn I shall be wed
To Arthur ; noble, good, and kind is he ;
And though he claims my heart, I still love thee ;
And though to foreign lands I needs must go,
My love for France will live and stronger grow.
Yea, all her scenes I've prized too long, too dear,
Think not they'll fade or quickly disappear.
Whatever be my lot, oh, mother kind,
Thy name within my memory thou wilt find !”

“ It is not that, my child,” the lady said,
“ But as thou knowest well, Count Henri's dead,
Thy brother François gone and left me too,
All that I live for now, Delphine, is you.

For grandeur, wealth, and home, I little care,
If those I love no more partake and share."
Silent the maiden heard the lady's tale,
Silent because her words could not avail ;
Therefore she rose to view the setting sun
Sink in the west, for day was nearly done.

Grand look'd the city now, a lovely sight,
Steep'd in the summer sun's declining light ;
Grand stood fair Nôtre Dame, whose many bells
Chimed in the evening breeze with rising swells ;
Down through the winding street processions pass
Slowly, to celebrate the evening mass ;
Far lie vast vineyards of the purple vine,
Which 'gainst their verdant leaves resplendent shine ;
Mansions and villas too, whose gardens flank,
In long and sloping lines, the swift Seine's bank ;
The busy Tuileries is quite at rest,
For in its even paths there is no guest ;
Then too the convent towers and grounds are seen,
The well remember'd home of young Delphine :
Within its walls she learned in bygone days
To raise her voice in psalms of highest praise,

And in its garden oft awhile she stray'd,
To watch, as she did now, the day's orb fade.

The bells have ceased, slowly the sun descends
To rest again ; rising, the fair moon wends
Her way o'er azure skies, close by her side
A thousand lamps are seen, their queen to guide :
Myriads appear, studding that far-off plain
Through which she moves along, supreme to reign.
Still stood Delphine, still at the window high,
Through which at intervals the faint airs sigh :
Lingering she watch'd it all with aching heart,
Asking herself if yet from France she'd part.
All things so solemn, all so grand they seem'd,
More beautiful than she had ever dream'd.
Towers, domes, fields, gardens, hamlets silver-white,
Reflected by the moon's transcendent light ;
Rivers like lines of molten silver lie,
In lovely contrast with the azure sky.
In rapture Delphine stood, fain would she go,
Suddenly breathed a song softly and low.

“ Adieu, fair France ! I prize thy treasures
More than all else earth can give ;

Thou art blest with many pleasures,
In thy land I love to live.

“ Adieu, fair France! I go to wander
On a foreign strand awhile,
On thy glories still I'll ponder,
Though within a distant isle.

“ Adieu, fair France! thy scenes are graven
Deeply on this heart of mine :
Thou shalt prove my lifeboat's haven,
When all other joys decline.

“ Adieu, fair France! another owns me,
I am thine no more, no more ;
But no power it has dethrones thee,
For I whisper ‘ Au revoir.’ ”

One moment more the maiden lingers there,
Kneeling, repeats a short, an earnest prayer :
“ Ave Maria, bless and guide thy child
Who treads life's weary way, life's mazy wild,
Still lead me on through all till I have passed
That narrow way that leads to Heaven at last.”

Rising, she turns away, forgetting all,
And flies in haste along the silent hall ;
Where hung the sword and shield Count Henri bore
E'en in that cruel night he fell in war ;
There marble statues of the good and brave,
Of those who died their fellow men to save.
Softly she passes on from place to place,
Trying kind Lady Marie's steps to trace ;
Opening the curtain of the grand saloon
She finds her—much surprised—not quite alone :
Arthur was seated by the Lady's side,
Conversing of Delphine, his destined bride,
Who, with a cheek of rosy mirthful dye,
Stole softly in, advancing silently ;
But soon she shared his company and words,
Which her fond heart like gold and jewels hoards.
Together now Delphine and Arthur stand
Close by the open casement, hand in hand.
“ To-morrow soon will be ; I must depart ;
Delphine, thou hast the love of all my heart.
To know I such a loving heart possess,
Is unto me continual happiness :
And my one task shall be to make for thee
A home of peace and joy beyond the sea.

How proudly I will take thee to mine isle,
And show thee there how many blessings smile
Around, upon it ; may its beauties prove
Worthy of thee, and of thy noble love ! ”
Pressing her hand in silence, went his way,
Waiting with anxious heart the coming day.

Then slow the last “ Good Night ” the maiden
takes,
To Lady Marie, and her way she makes,
Not to retire to rest, for sleep had flown ;
She could not think of aught but him alone,
His loving smile, and more, his parting token,
Showing his vow to her remain’d unbroken.

E’en as the midnight hour approach’d, sweet
sounds
Were faintly wafted o’er the castle grounds,
Backward in haste her lattice flung, and sprang
To list the strain that through the clear air rang.
There in the distant close, beside the gate,
She spied a form e’en at this hour so late,
Singing in sweetest voice an English air ;

Then well she knew the one that linger'd there.
And, as she listen'd, in the solemn night
She heard him say, "Beloved Delphine, Good
Night!"

PART V.

SUSPENSE.

AT the first glimmer in the far-off east,
Delphine awoke, by slumber much refresh'd.
Soon by her maids was she in robes array'd,
Over her shoulders golden tresses stray'd,
Wreathed with rich clusters of the orange flower,
Cull'd from the distant trees' o'erladen bower;
Over her head a thin white veil is thrown,
All round her path the blossoms lie bestrown.
When all is done she moves along with grace,
Lovely in form, and beautiful in face;
She meets her mother, sad, yet calm and mild,
With loving smile the lady greets her child;
Soon Nôtre Dame's grand bells ring through the air
To warn them they must leave, and hasten there.

Then up the sacred aisle she slowly moves,
And waits with anxious heart the one she loves.
All are assembled save the look'd-for guest ;
“ Why does he tarry ? ” is the quick request ;
“ Why comes he not ? for now the chimes are done ! ”
Still there they wait, and there she stands alone,
Each step they listen for, at every sound
Her heart throbs high, but yet he is not found.
All wait—“ But no, ah no, ”—the wild winds say,
He cannot come, for he is far away.
Time seals it now with stern and powerful hand,
Yet must she wait till Fortune wave her wand.

Back they return, back to the castle walls,
Where the sweet scent from fount and floweret falls ;
Then says she in her wild and vague dismay,
“ Oh, where is he, why comes he not to-day ?
Oh ! let me die, since earth no more can give
The only one for whom I care to live !
Oh ! is he dead, or perish'd by the hand
Of some one who bears hatred to his land ? ”

But, hark ! a sound is heard of horses' feet ;
Who is it ? see, Sir Arthur she doth greet !

Down at her feet he kneels to tell his tale :
“ I must to-day for India’s fair shore sail.
A war is broken out in distant lands,
And I must go, my general aid demands.
As I return’d last eve to my own home,
I found despatches from his hand had come.
Oh, Delphine, oh, forgive this fickle heart,
Only, in truth, from thee this once I’ll part ;
And love me still—forgive—I vow I’ll wed
Thee yet, fulfilling all to thee I’ve said,
And think on me, though banish’d for a time ;
I know ’tis hard, but, Delphine, thou art mine.
Say ere I go (to stay time lets me not),
That by thee I shall never be forgot !”

“ No,” cried the maiden, “ while I live, I’ll prove
A faithful heart in sorrow and in love ;
When you return Delphine will lie in peace
’Neath yon green mound where grief will ever
cease.”

“ Oh, Delphine ! speak not thus, I love too well.
Once more, my destined bride, farewell, farewell !
I will return, and you shall happy be ;
Believ’st thou not ? beloved, trust in me.”

She listen'd earnestly to all he said,
She could not speak, but gently bow'd her head.

Loud blew a horn, he turn'd in haste away ;
He dared not look again, Adieu to say.

PART VI.


DEPARTURE FOR THE WAR.

THEN Lady Marie, in an angry mood,
Sat down and wrote in hours of solitude
To Arthur, telling him no more could she
Consent unto their ties of sympathy ;
And never would she now let young Delphine
Become an English bride, a soldiers queen,
'Twere better not to love, if war should make
Each time the loved one lone and desolate.

Meanwhile Sir Arthur unto India sail'd,
For in that land a mutiny prevail'd,
And cruel natives rising at their foe
Laid many a guiltless babe and mother low.

And soldiers fought each other, side by side,
All the fair land with British blood was dyed.
Still English armies march'd with stern intent,
And conquer'd every town through which they went ;
'Neath burning skies, on barren wastes they toil'd,
Before their face the dusky foes recoil'd.
Loud sounded cannons ; red the war fires gleam'd
Round Bithpoor's walls the British standard stream'd ;
Within the walls of Lucknow, hour by hour,
The little garrison withstood the power
Of overwhelming foes, that round her gate
Perpetually lay in secret wait.
Fresh armies landed, scouting far the foe,
Till famine and disease laid many low :
Sir Arthur fought, and every danger braved,
And many a wandering helpless one he saved.

But changed is Delphine, and her cheeks' rich dyes
Have faded like the tints in autumn skies ;
The hectic flush is burning in their place,
Whilst day by day more pale becomes her face.
Quiet and grave is she, the tear drop gleams
On her soft cheek, in truth her worn heart seems
Laden with sorrow more than she can bear ;



She longs to die and rest from all her care.
This is the maid, who a short time ago
Dreaded to leave all that she loved below ;
Once it all seem'd sweet bliss beyond compare,
Now all her hopes have sunk in deep despair.

Daily she wends her way to Nôtre Dame,
Each quiet eve when all around is calm :
'Twas once after a celebration grand,
She linger'd there with firm and clasped hand,
Watching the glowing colours shining on
The chancel floor, that all resplendent shone ;
The columns too were dyed, and brightly ray'd,
And through the aisles the late notes echoing stray'd :
The tapers on the altar yet burnt bright,
Casting around a dim and hallow'd light.
Soon she drew near alone, to pray, confess
Her faults, and ask of God her life to bless.
And as she knelt, she pray'd that soon she might
Pass from this world to one that's far more bright ;
Where all is joy, where all is holy peace,
And where the songs of angels never cease.

PART VII.

CONCLUSION.

THE weeks went by, long Lady Marie sought
To check the sorrow that her hand had wrought;
(And Delphine, all unconscious of her deed,
Truly believed at last that he had freed
Himself from her, and proved a fickle heart,
And for the war feign'd only to depart.)
A ceaseless round of every pleasure plann'd
At home, that art and riches could command.
To every sight, to every ball, Delphine
Did Lady Marie take when France was seen.
She journey'd unto distant lands, and tried
To quench her sorrow in excitement's tide.

And many sought her hand, and tried in vain
Even to win a smile, one look to gain.
And Lady Marie proud and stately moved,
And sternly frown'd upon all those who loved.
Till one day came an artist of renown,
And at her feet laid down his golden crown

Of Fame, and humbly offer'd her to share
The trophies he had won with so much care.
High in the palace of St. Cloud were hung
His pictures, and his praise was ever sung
By royal lips, by courtiers, and by all
Who gazed upon the decorated wall.

He, after many vain entreaties, won
The heart of this young maiden for his own.
But never more the beaming smile return'd,
Although his care for her high praises earn'd ;
He loved her for her gentle ways and grace,
Not only for her loveliness of face.
Loud through the land of France his fame wasspread,
Proudly he shared it with the one he wed.

* * * *


Two years roll'd by, in distant lands assuaged
By slow degrees the conflict that had raged.
'Twas on one glorious autumn even-tide,
The artist sat in silence with his bride ;
A message came from India's far-off land,
Written and seal'd by brave Sir Arthur's hand
Saying, that though the glories of the war

Had often separated them afar,
All through the densest fight he had maintain'd
A ceaseless love for her, and ever aim'd
To take new honours from a well-fought field.
That such, a word of praise from her might yield,
But now around deep Cawnpore's crimson well,
With other comrades he had fought, and fell ;
So unto France he could return no more,
His brilliant life of fame and love was o'er.
This was his last farewell, his latest breath ;
Faithful to her he proved through life, in death
He only ask'd one tear, one sigh, to prove
He once possess'd her noble heart of love.

1864.



ONLY A REMARK.

E deem men's minds most wonderful,
And gifted with vast power,
When labouring long they calculate
Each star's appointed hour ;

They measure out the world's extent,
Each acre, without line,
They e'en presume to prophesy
Each empire's rise—decline.

They lay down laws sedate and stern,
That millions must obey,
Their books the longest lived could ne'er
Peruse, yet what are they ?

They judge us sternly and reprove,
Because they cannot see
Or understand each other's heart,
Why this and that should be.

Their knowledge cannot penetrate
The workings of the mind,
How oft they misinterpret
What on the face they find !

The substance, and the planet's light,
They tell us what they are !
But, if they cannot guess so near,
How *can* they know so far ?

August, 1870.



THE MIDNIGHT OF THE OLD YEAR.



YES, the year is growing old.
'Tis passing as a tale told,
Oh ! 'tis going far away,
Gone for aye will be its ray.
Hark ! its time has come at last,
'Twill be number'd with the past.
See how fast it glideth by,
Fleeting to eternity.
Silence hushes all around,
Not a murmur, not a sound,
Save the tolling of a bell,
Breathing softly, Fare ye well.
Hark ! again its warnings told
It is growing grey and old ;
It would stay, but never more
Will the sunshine gild it o'er.
Hark ! again its warnings break
Over every stream and lake,

Over all the trees and fields,
How reluctantly it yields.
Hark ! ye careless ones awhile,
Let not pleasure's voice beguile.
Think, oh ! think of these deep sounds,
How they close Life's narrow bounds.
Hark ! ye sadden'd ones of Time,
There is warning in that chime ;
As each time its voice appeals,
Some one to the grave it seals.
Hark ! take heed ; again a sound
Rings through all the rocks around.
It must not stay, its time has come,
It must depart from its brief home.
Hark ! the snow has ceased to fall,
'Tis cover'd with a spotless pall,
And the silver moon on high
Shines upon it tranquilly.
Hark ! strange voices in the air
Breathe their last and solemn prayer.
All the clouds move slowly by
In the deep cerulean sky.
Hark ! my soul, and learn by this,
What parting from this wide world is.

Like as this year doth roll away,
So too shalt thou thy call obey.
Hark ! together Death and Night
Descend, but wither in their flight.
Shall they bear this year away,
Far beyond the light of day ?
Hark ! the latest breath it sighs
As it passes from the skies.
All is over, all is past,
It has breathed its last—its last.
Hark again ! a tolling bell
Whispers sadly, fare ye well.
All its pleasure, all its pain,
Ne'er will come or live again.

Now a silence broods around,
What is in that silence found ?
Time to think upon the scene
That is not now, though once has been.
But each deed, each thought on high
Shall be kept eternally.

IN MEMORIAM.



DEAR child ! thou died'st too soon,
Ere that the inconstant moon
Had sped the courses that thy years
should run.
How gladly would I give
My life, for thee to live,
And change the cold earth's bosom for the radiant
sun.

But thou hast done thy task,
And I should vainly ask
A boon, which granted would renew thy pain ;
Rather do thou lie still,
And wait thy Shepherd's will,
Telling the passing hours until we meet again.

Let mine eyes pierce the sod
Where, waiting for their God,
In countless hosts with thee thy kindred lie ;

Each to each whispering low,
Each cheering each one's woe,
And longing for the time when they shall sing on high.

Babes on their mothers' breast,
Taking their death-long rest,
Clasp'd in each other's arms till doom shall sound ;
Parents and children dear,
O'er whom fell many a tear,
Attune their mystic voices underneath the ground.

What ! though thy mouldering form
Feeds now the charnel worm,
It shall stand brightly forth again by Him ;
When thy poor weary one,
His long day past and done,
Shall gaze from far upon thee till his eyes grow dim.

Yet, ere the day shall come
For thy returning home,
Angels of joy shall bid thee sing their strains,
Thy still voice angel-taught
Thrill through the echoing vault,
And all the earth for thee resound the grand refrains.





NOTES.

NOTE 1. — *The Sentinel of Pompeii*, p. 26.

DURING the excavation of Pompeii that took place several years after the great eruption of Vesuvius over that city, a skeleton of a young sentinel was discovered. The sudden warning causing such confusion and hurry, orders to leave his post were forgotten to be sent him from the emperor, and he remained "faithful unto death."

NOTE 2. — *The Mexican Captive*, p. 31.

"Tezcallipoca was called by the Mexicans 'the soul of the world,' he is depicted as a handsome man endowed with perpetual youth. A year before the intended sacrifice, a captive, distinguished for his personal beauty, is selected to represent this deity. Every honour is paid him, every pleasure allowed him; he lives a life of ease and idleness; and when the term of his short-lived glories is at an end, he is led to the sacrificial stone at the summit of the temple. His gaudy apparel is taken from him, he throws away the chaplet of flowers and snaps the musical instrument asunder that had solaced him in the hours of captivity; and there, stretched upon the huge block of jasper which constitutes the altar, and by the priests awaiting, is barbarously put to death."—PRESCOTT'S *Conquest of Mexico*, vol. i. chap. iii. p. 75.

NOTE 3.—*A Message from the Sea*, p. 64.

A bottle, containing several messages, was thrown off the deck, and, after coursing over the waters, was finally washed upon the coast of France.

NOTE 4.—*Llanthony Abbey*, p. 65.

"Lantonia Prima, Llanthony or Llanhodenei, in Monmouthshire. Here in a very solitary valley, not long after the year 1108, was settled a priory of canons regular of the order of St. Austin (dedicated to St. John Baptist), who acknowledged Hugh Lacy as their founder.

"*William*, a military retainer of Hugh de Lacy, and Eraisius, chaplain to Queen Maud, retired thither A. D. 1103, and built a church and hermitage, which Eraisius obtained to be converted into a priory of regular canons, of which he became the first prior.

"The remains of Llanthony are still magnificent; beautifully situated in the vale of Ewias."—DUGDALE's *Monasticon Anglicanum*, vol. i. part i. pp. 569-70.

NOTE 5.—*Ida de Vere*, p. 82.

This tale is founded on fact. The dream is perfectly true, it occurred after a conversation similar to the one related, not embellished in the slightest, for alas! words have not power to describe it in its full beauty.

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